

's Conniff

The International Ray Conniff Fan Club Magazine, Double Edition No. 3 and 4 /2003



In this edition:

The CD Column (page 6 - 11)

- Ray Conniff: The Collection ● 30 Exitos ● Antología Latina
 - Star Box ● Maravilloso ● Los Esenciales
 - Los Que Triunfaron ● Love Affair & Somewhere My Love
 - Concert in Rhythm, Vol. 2 & The Perfect '10' Classics ● Deletions
 - Una Caricia, Un Sentimiento ● Spanish Eyes (a tribute to Bert Kaempfert)
- All about "The Essential Ray Conniff", a 2 CD set compiled by Tamara Conniff and others
 - New and forthcoming CD's featuring Ray Conniff backings

Serge Elhaik's Ray Conniff Story, part 35: focus on 1964, part 1:

"Friendly Persuasion" (page 12 - 16)

Spotlight on singer Gene Merlino (page 17)

All about the 2003 Ray Conniff Fan Club Convention in Berlin (page 18 - 22), including "The Ray Conniff Quiz" (page 21)

Ray Conniff Posters / Rare Record Covers (page 24 + 25)

Ray Conniff's contributions to the Big and Small Screens (page 26)

An article from Brazil (page 27)

Remembering John Best (page 28 + 29)

Serge Elhaik's "News of the Past", focus on Bob Ballard and more (page 31)

Letters (page 2, 4, 16, 22, 23, 28, 29, 30)

Editorial (page 2 + 3)

Committee / Subscription rates (page 32)

Synopses in German / Zusammenfassungen in deutscher Sprache (Seite 4, 5, 20)



Dear Ray Conniff Fans,

The waiting is over - here is 's *Conniff*, double edition 3 and 4 / 2003, at long last! Before I let you know what is in it (and some extra information), here is an **important note**:

From 2005, 's *Conniff* will no longer be available in its printed form. Instead, it will become solely available through the Internet, and can be downloaded free from Manfred's Ray Conniff Page. Instead of the usual four editions, in 2003 there have only been three. In 2004, instead of four editions, there will only be two, and **the very last printed issue will be produced for the 2005 Fan Club Convention in Cardiff, Wales**. (Please note that subscriptions are for four editions, not per year. This double edition counts as ONE!) I was forced to make this decision because of less leisure time and more obligations at work. I hope you will understand and accept it. Rest assured that I will continue my efforts to keep Ray's music and memory alive. If you have paid your subs this summer, you need not worry about a thing and will get all remaining issues. If your subs are due in early 2004, and you want to remain on the mailing list, please remit $\frac{3}{4}$ only. (For details of fees, please see the last page of this edition.)

Thank you all who wrote wonderful letters after they received the **Memorial Edition**, which was also mentioned in "Journal into Melody", issue No. 156 (September 2003), page 95, as follows:

Our friends in the International Ray Conniff Fan Club have published what can only be described as a most impressive tribute to Ray Conniff, who died on 12 October 2002 aged 85. 'S Always Conniff is a Special Memorial Edition of the Club's Newsletter, with full colour printing on glossy paper covering 68 A4 pages, which features numerous tributes from friends and members, and reports of his passing in various publications around the world. The compilation must have been a mammoth task, and it is a credit to everyone who was involved with it. Our own Secretary's message to Manfred Thönicke is included on page 59. (Great comment, highly appreciated.)

As mentioned in the last edition that came with the special Memorial Edition, Vera wrote, "Please give my love to everyone at the Ray Conniff fan club convention. I know that Ray's wish was to join you all one time, maybe he will be with you this time." Well, Ray's spirit was

truly there. **The 2003 Ray Conniff Fan Club Convention in Berlin** was wonderful, marvelous, awful nice! Please read all about it in this edition.

I received **the cartoon on the cover** which I titled *Ray in Heaven* by fax on August 28. I do not know who sent it. At the top where normally the sender's name is printed it says "Advocacia", which I believe is the name of a magazine in Brazil. And according to the way the date was written, it must have been faxed from there. I hope nobody is offended. I must confess I find it humorous and done in a loving manner. It must have been sketched by a true Ray Conniff fan. Allegedly, it was done by **cartoonist Alex Ponciano**. If you have further details, please contact me and let me know. Thanks!

It is such a shame that the 2 CD set (to be titled **"The Essential Ray Conniff"**), compiled by Didier Deutsch with the help of Tamara Conniff (and a little contribution by yours truly) has not been released in time to commemorate Ray's passing away a year ago. I do not know the reasons for the postponement, but I do hope that it will be released soon, as long as the memory of Ray is still fresh in people's minds. I would have appreciated the release of some of his shows on DVD's as well. It also seems that we will probably never see Ray's last performance, which was at Liza Minnelli and David Gest's wedding. They are separated now, and the media reported some time ago that "the couple have blamed a 29-year-old VH1 producer named Rob Weiss for destroying their reality show, "Liza & David", before it even started."

In the last edition of 's *Conniff* I mentioned the possibility of a **Ray Conniff Memorial Tour** through Latin America. However, this project has not materialized, and for the time being there are **no such plans**, I am afraid to say.

Here's a cordial welcome to the newest and youngest member of the Ray Conniff International Fan Club: **David James Mitchell**, son of Linda and Doug Mitchell, was born on Tuesday September 2. He weighed 8 pounds 10 ounces and has brown hair.

Please note that my Ray Conniff Page may have to be moved to a **new Internet address** (URL) some time in the near future. The reason is that my provider will only grant 2 MB free and thus I will be forced to pay in order to make use of about 10 MB that I will need to maintain all my web pages. If I am informed correctly, the new URL will be "www.thoenicke.de/rayconniff".

Wendell's Brazilian Ray Conniff Fan Page "'s Wonderful" is unavailable at the moment. He, like me, has to move his pages to a new URL. As soon as it becomes available, I will feature the new address of his pages (and a link leading to them) on my Conniff Page - and so will Doug on his.

I have removed all "@" characters from my Internet pages because they make it easy for people who send out spam to collect email addresses. Also, the email links are gone for security reasons. Speaking of which: Please study the last page for Elias' new email address.

I finally managed to obtain CD copies of **Jim Stone's tribute to Ray Conniff**, which turned out to be a great three hour radio show, featuring the voices of Doug Mitchell, Jay Meyer, Perry La Marca, Ron Hicklin - and Ray himself, who gave his last interview over the phone.

On August 25, Clemens Krauss and Ingo Stein joined me for **a two hour radio show on North German Radio** (Hamburg, 90,3), which was devoted to Ray and his music. I was invited at rather a short notice - two days before the show. So I could not let them have my ideas for the selection of tracks. However, it turned out to be first-rate. I could hardly have suggested better material. (I managed, however, to have one track - *Café de Manha* - included, so that people also could get an idea of what his last album sounded like.) The show was aired live from 7 to 9 pm. There was an audience of about 50 people, who danced along to and thoroughly enjoyed Ray's music. I was less nervous than I thought I would be. A little distracting, however, was the clock in front of me, saying that I only had so-and-so-many seconds left for what I wanted to say. That's why I had to speak fast. I did not know the questions in advance, only the topics the host (Gerd Spiekermann) wanted to tackle. We had brought tour posters and record covers to decorate the room. Later, we chatted with the radio people about Ray's music over a couple of glasses of wine and promised to stay in touch.

Again, Marianne and I went to California this summer. This time, however, **our visit to Los Angeles** was a lot different than in the past. Unfortunately, both Vera and Tamara were in Switzerland, when we were there. Of course, we paid a visit to Ray's grave. I did not expect the graveyard to be so small, squeezed in between skyscrapers in Westwood. There you can also find the (urn)graves of celebrities such as Marilyn Monroe, Dean Martin, Walter Mat-

thau, Jack Lemon, and Natalie Wood. Ray's grave is at a very prominent place right opposite the chapel.

We spent some time with **Tricia and Perry La Marca** and **Don Buchwald**, who we got to know in Berlin during the Convention. We will always remember the great meals, accompanied with wonderful wine and the company we shared! Perry and Tricia kindly gave me a copy of the photo with Vera and Ray which was taken at their wedding. I am sure you will be happy to find it here:



And I must not forget to mention that singer **Dave Theriault** was kind enough to take Marianne and me on a private tour through the Warner Bros. studios, where e.g. "Colombo", and "Friends" had been filmed. Unfortunately, it was the summer break, and no celebrities were around. Never mind. This was great, nevertheless! Thank you all, Perry, Tricia, Don and Dave, for making this year's stay in LA so special.

Meanwhile we had sort of a mini-convention in London in October: Marianne und I met with Tricia La Marca, Mike and Sheila Leach, and Clemens Krauss and Irmi. Without Ray and his music I would have never made the acquaintance of so many great people!

Thanks also go to everybody, who contributed to this edition - including those who keep me informed about the Ray Conniff CD releases in their countries.

Thank you dearly, Serge, for another great part of your Ray Conniff Story. We are already looking forward to the next one.

I hope you will enjoy reading the fourth last hardcopy edition of 's Conniff and hope you will understand my decision (see above).

Best wishes to you all,

Manfred

Liebe Ray Conniff Fans,

Hier ist nun endlich die neue Ausgabe von 's Conniff. Es handelt sich um die erste Doppel-Nummer, die jedoch - was die Clubbeiträge angeht - als eine einzige Ausgabe gezählt wird. In Zukunft wird die Clubzeitschrift nicht mehr so regelmäßig wie bisher erscheinen können. Ich habe lange mit mir gerungen und mich dann wie folgt entschieden:

Ab 2005 werde ich das Clubmagazin nicht gewohnt in gedruckter Form produzieren, sondern nur noch per Internet verbreiten. Man wird es dann gratis von meiner Ray Conniff-Seite herunterladen können. Im Jahre 2003 gibt es statt der gewohnten 4 Ausgaben nur 3, und 2004 nur 2. Die letzte gedruckte Ausgabe wird zur Ray Conniff Fan Club Convention 2005 in Cardiff erscheinen. (Anm.: Clubbeiträge gelten für 4 Ausgaben, nicht pro Jahr!) Es tut mir leid, aber ich fühle mich aus beruflichen Gründen dazu gezwungen, nur noch 4 Ausgaben herzustellen. Mir fehlt einfach die Zeit dazu. (Das Anfertigen der Druckvorlagen macht ja noch Spaß, aber das stundenlange Drucken, Heften, Eintüten usw. weniger.) Dennoch werde ich alles tun, um Rays Musik und die Erinnerung daran am Leben zu erhalten. Wer soeben gerade den normalen Betrag überwiesen hat, erhält neben dieser Ausgabe alle drei weiteren. Wessen Clubbeitrag Anfang 2004 fällig ist, überweist nur noch $\frac{3}{4}$, danach ist nur noch die Hälfte für die letzten beiden Ausgaben fällig usw. (Siehe letzte Seite bzgl. Details.)

Ich möchte mich bei dieser Gelegenheit herzlich bei all' denen bedanken, die mir geschrieben haben, nachdem sie ihr Exemplar der „Memorial Edition“ erhalten hatten. Die Resonanz war sehr groß, und ich hatte den Eindruck, dass sich die Mühe lohnt hat.

Ein herzliches Dankeschön geht auch an Romanus Krick, der keine Gelegenheit auslässt, um an Ray und seine Musik zu erinnern. So bringt er ständig Rays Musik in seinen Radiosendungen im Krankenhausfunk Münster und erinnerte auch am 12. Oktober an dessen ersten Todestag. Herr Krick ist Autogrammsammler und hat auf die Titelseite der Zeitschrift namens „Autographensammler“ Nr. 1/2003 die Notenseite mit Unterschriften von Ray, seinen Musikern und Sängern gebracht, wie sie 1998 in einer Ausgabe von 's Conniff zu finden war.

Ich hatte am 25. August Gelegenheit, über Ray und seine Musik im Radio zu plaudern. Relativ kurzfristig rief mich die Redaktion von der Hamburg-Welle des NDR (90,3) an und fragte

mich, ob ich dazu Lust hätte. Und ob! Clemens Krauss und Ingo Stein begleiteten mich in den Alsterpavillon, von wo die Sendung live ausgestrahlt wurde. Es waren ca. 50 Personen anwesend, die zu Rays Musik tanzten.

Elmar Nobis schrieb daraufhin: *Lieber Manfred Thönicke, seit der 1.LP "Happy Beat" Mitte der sechziger Jahre gehöre ich ebenfalls zu den in der Sendung angesprochenen "Conniff-Verrückten". Zum Leidwesen meiner Familie höre ich im Auto und zu Hause nur Conniff-Musik. Die Sendung gab auch für Außenstehende umfassende und vielseitige Informationen über sein Lebenswerk. Einige Ihrer Informationen waren mir auch noch nicht bekannt. Gefallen hat mir die Aussage, dass Sie von der Familie „adoptiert“ wurden und Ray Conniff besser kannten als er sich selber. Sie haben in die Sendung Insider-Kenntnisse eingebracht, die kein Moderator wissen kann. Dass die Jazz-Zeit einen breiten Raum einnahm, war die Voraussetzung und Grundlage dafür, seinen späteren Conniff-Sound zu verstehen.*

Anmerkung: Das Musikprogramm war bereits zusammengestellt, als man mich um meine Teilnahme bat. Ich glaube, ich hätte gar nicht so viele andere Titel ausgewählt. Es gelang mir, einen Titel aus Rays letztem Album „reinzumogeln“, damit man auch hören konnte, dass es bis zuletzt den alten Jazzer Conniff noch gab. Zuvor hatte Moderator Gerd Spiekermann etliche Titel von Artie Shaw, Bob Crosby usw. gespielt, sodass „Cafe de Manha“ mit seinem herrlichen Trompetensolo wunderbar in die Sendung passte.

Und Gerhard Fobbe aus Hamburg schrieb: *Hallo, Herr Thönicke, ich habe selbstverständlich vorm Radio gesessen. Ich war doch sehr überrascht, dass 90,3 Ray Conniff diese fast zweistündige Sendung gewidmet hat. In meinem Büro hängen etliche Bilder von Ray Conniff, und immer wieder werde ich darauf angesprochen. Dass wir Fans ab 2005 nur noch über das Internet über 's Conniff informiert werden, geht in Ordnung. Ich glaube Ihnen gern, dass die Aufbereitung und der Versand in der ursprünglichen Form für Sie einen enormen Zeitaufwand bedeuten. Gibt es eigentlich in Buchform eine Biographie über Ray Conniff? Die Publikation über Bert Kaempfert von Marc Boettcher fand ich sehr lesenswert. Ich würde mir wünschen, auch über Ray Conniff in ähnlicher Form mal etwas zu finden.*

Leider ist es nie dazu gekommen. Mir ist bekannt, dass sich Rays brasilianischer Konzertagent Manuel Poladian diesbezüglich in einem Interview nach Rays Tod geäußert hat. Ob er

nach wie vor diese Pläne hat, sind mir nicht bekannt. Was Serge Elhaïks Ray Conniff Story angeht, so kann man dieser Ausgabe entnehmen, dass er erst bei 1964 angelangt ist. Vielleicht gelingt es Serge und mir ja gemeinsam, eine Ray Conniff Biografie zu erstellen - spätestens dann, wenn wir beide pensioniert sind...

Nun aber wieder zu dieser Ausgabe: Auf der Titelseite habe ich einen Cartoon abgebildet, der mir per Fax zugesandt wurde. Ich habe keine Ahnung, wer der Absender ist. Ich nehme an, dass es aus der brasilianischen Zeitschrift „Advocacia“ stammt. Herr Fobbe, der beim Hamburger Abendblatt tätig ist, schrieb dazu: *Hallo, Herr Thönicke, der Cartoon könnte von dem Cartoonisten Alex Ponciano sein; habe diesen Namen einmal in Google abgefragt und dort eine Homepage von ihm gefunden.* Ich hoffe, niemand empfindet diese Zeichnung als beleidigend. Ich persönlich finde, sie drückt liebevolle Zuneigung aus.

Im Mai gedachten ca. 50 Ray Conniff Fans in Berlin der Musik des Maestros auf der 2003 Convention, die ein voller Erfolg war. (Näheres in diesem Heft.) Ein herzliches Dankeschön geht an Otto und Markus, die erheblich zum Gelingen beigetragen haben. Es war eine größere Anzahl von Fans aus Wales dabei (inklusive John Gay, dem wir die Existenz des Fotoalbums und der Memorial Edition verdanken). Bevor ich überhaupt ein Meinungsbild ermitteln konnte, wer für welchen Ort für die nächste Ray Conniff Fan Club Convention plädierte, boten sie sich an, die nächste im Jahre 2005 in Cardiff stattfinden zu lassen, was breite Zustimmung fand.

Es wird übrigens auf absehbare Zeit keine Ray Conniff Memorial Tour in Lateinamerika geben.

Die Auflistung von „neuen“ CDs ist in dieser Ausgabe relativ lang. Worauf etliche Fans jedoch brennend gewartet haben, ist leider bislang nicht erschienen: Ich meine eine Doppel-CD, an deren Titelauswahl ich habe auch ein wenig mitwirken können. Sie soll „The Essential Ray Conniff“ heißen und sollte ursprünglich im Mai, dann im September erscheinen. Nach meinem derzeitigen Wissensstand ist das Veröffentlichungsdatum nun irgendwann im Jahre 2004 - was sehr bedauerlich ist, denn noch ist die Erinnerung an Ray relativ frisch. Seit Rays Tod hätte man nicht nur „Memorial“-CDs, sondern auch DVDs mit Ray Conniff Shows auf den Markt bringen sollen. Die mit Tamaras Hilfe zusammengestellte Doppel-CD wird jedenfalls etliche Schätze beinhalten - nicht nur die üblichen großen Erfolge, sondern auch viele Titel, die nur auf Singles erschienen waren und etli-

che, für die Ray Conniff als Komponist verantwortlich zeichnete. Bleiben wir gespannt und besuchen ab und zu Dougs oder meine Internetseiten, um Näheres zu erfahren. Da wir gerade dabei sind: Es kann sein, dass sich bis zum Jahresende die Adresse (URL) meiner Internetseite ändern wird, weil die Telekom bis dahin vorhat, alle Internetseiten mit „Name.beit.online“ abzuschalten und für bislang kostenfreien Speicherplatz zu kassieren.

Marianne und ich waren im Sommer wieder in den USA. Leider trafen wir in Los Angeles niemand von der Conniff-Familie an. Vera und Tamara waren zur selben Zeit in der Schweiz. Wir besuchten natürlich Rays Grab, welches auf einem sehr kleinen Friedhof in Westwood ist. Dort findet man auch die (Urnen)gräber von Marilyn Monroe, Dean Martin, Walter Matthau, Jack Lemon usw.



Wir verbrachten etliche Zeit bei fantastischem Essen und besten Weinen mit Perry und Tricia La Marca. (Sie schenkten mir das Foto mit Ray und Vera, was an ihrer Hochzeit aufgenommen wurde.) Es gesellte sich auch Don Buchwald dazu, den wir erst im Mai in Berlin während der Convention kennen gelernt hatten. Und Sänger David Theriault war so freundlich, Marianne und mich durch die Warner Bros.-Studios zu führen. Im Oktober gab's schon wieder eine „Mini-Convention“: In London trafen wir (zusammen mit Clemens und Irmi) Tricia La Marca und Michael und Sheila Leach. Ja, ich verdanke Ray nicht nur wundervolle Musik, sondern auch die Bekanntschaft vieler großartiger Menschen.

Ich möchte mich herzlich bei all' denjenigen bedanken, die Material für diese Ausgabe beige-steuert haben - allen voran natürlich Serge Elhaïk, der wieder einmal eine höchst interessante Folge seiner Ray Conniff Story verfasst hat.

Herzliche Grüße,

Manfred

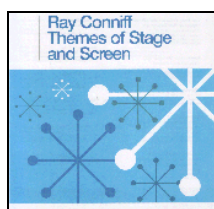
In edition No. 2/2003 I listed **RAY CONNIFF: THE COLLECTION**, however, without cover artwork. The release of the 3 CD set was postponed several times. Meanwhile it has become available in many countries. It seems the set was also released in Canada under the title **PORTRAIT** on June 19, 2003. (This needs to be confirmed.) The three CD's have individual covers, but come in a cardboard wrapping (shown on the right). Here are details of Columbia 511151 2, made in the UK (Total: 60 tracks)

**CD#1: Ray Conniff Orchestra and Chorus:**

's Wonderful / Begin The Beguine / Stardust / They Can't Take That Away From Me / Moonlight Serenade / You Do Something To Me / The Continental / Smoke Gets In Your Eyes / Lullaby Of Birdland / Memories Are Made Of This / Love Me Tender / Unchained Melody / Only You (And You Alone) / Stranger In Paradise / Summertime / Volare / Chanson D'amour / Mack The Knife / Blueberry Hill / You Make Me Feel So Young

**CD#2: Ray Conniff Singers:**

These Foolish Things / I Love How You Love Me / Young At Heart / Invisible Tears / Kisses Sweeter Than Wine / Downtown / Somethin' Stupid / The Look Of Love / Music To Watch Girls By / A Man Without Love / This Guy's In Love With You / Up Up And Away / It Was A Very Good Year / Leaving On A Jet Plane / Early In The Morning / I'd Like To Teach The World To Sing / If You Could Read My Mind / Frost Festival / Send In The Clowns / Top Of The World

**CD#3: Themes of Stage and Screen:**

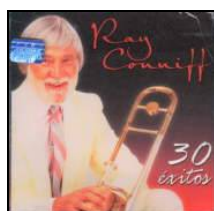
Where Is Your Heart (Moulin Rouge) / Somewhere My Love / Charade / Edelweiss / Wouldn't It Be Lovely / As Time Goes By / Moon River / Hello, Dolly / This Is My Song / Sunrise, Sunset / Cabaret / Georgy Girl / Born Free / Aquarius/Let The Sunshine In / A Time For Us / Where Do I Begin (Love Story) / Love Theme From "The Godfather" (Speak Softly, Love) / The Way We Were / Theme From "A Summer Place" / Don't Cry For Me Argentina

More CD releases which came to my attention in the summer of 2003 include the following:

Re-released in *Brazil* in June 2003: **'s Wonderful** (Sony 129954), **'s Marvelous** (Sony 129953), **'s Awful Nice** (Sony 129951), and **Concert in Rhythm, Vol. 1** (Sony 129950)

30 EXITOS (This CD was already mentioned in edition # 1/2003 on page 4, but details were incomplete)

(Released in Colombia on June 17, 2002 on Sony Music Strategic Marketing MS22 503631) *Note: Total of tracks is 32.*



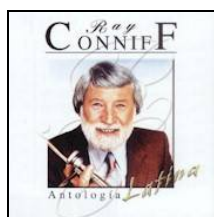
CD #1: Brazil / De Niña a Mujer / Green Eyes / Love Story / Cuando Sali de Cuba / Diosito Santo / Caballo Viejo / Mi Cafetal / Siboney / Cuando Calienta El Sol / Don't Cry For Me Argentina / Como Agua Para Chocolate / Volare / The Girl From Ipanema / El Condor Pasa / La Gota Fria

CD #2: New York New York / Moonlight Serenade / Besame Mucho / Love Theme from "The Godfather" / Me Olvide de Vivir / Boca Dulce Boca / Mi Tierra / La Mucura / Frenesi / Raindrops Keep Fallin' On My Head / Procuero Olvidarte / Te Llevo Dentro de Mi / Tico Tico / A La Antigua / La Media Vuelta / Com Abeja al Panal

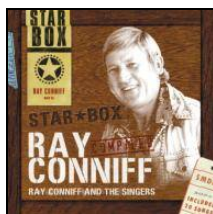
ANTOLOGÍA LATINA

(Sony Mexico, April 2003, Sony Strategic Marketing 2-505881)

Besame Mucho (from Say It With Music) / Cuando Calienta El Sol (from Exitos Latinos) / Green Eyes (from 's Continental) / Detalhes (from Exitos Latinos) / Cuando Sali De Cuba (from Siempre Latino) / La Mucura (from Siempre Latino) / Me Olvide De Vivir (from Siempre Latino) / Amor (vocal version from Amor, Amor) / A La Antiga (vocal version from Siempre Latino) / De Nina A Mujer (from Siempre Latino) / Tico Tico (from 's Continental) / Emociones (from Amor Amor) / La Bikina (from Exclusivamente Latino) / My Cha Chornia (from Amor Amor) / Esa Triste Guitarra (from Amor Amor) / Patricia, It's Patricia (from You Make Me Feel So Young) / Cama Y Mesa (from Amor Amor) / Lisbon Antigua (from 's Continental) / Caballo Viejo (from Fantastico) / Brazil (from Say It With Music)



Sony used many photos from Doug Mitchell's web site for the back cover, including several that he shot at Ray's Miami concerts in January 1996. The audio is not perfect on this CD, particularly on songs from Exitos Latinos and Amor, Amor.



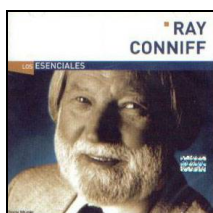
STAR BOX

(Sony Music, released in Japan on July 24, 2003, Order No.: MHCP60)
Track listing: New York New York / 's Wonderful / The Way You Look Tonight / Moonlight Serenade / Everybody Loves Somebody / Besame Mucho / Brazil / Pearly Shells / Somewhere My Love / Raindrops Keep Fallin' On My Head / My Favorite Things / The Impossible Dream / Cabaret / One / Memory / Invisible Tears / Song Sung Blue / Yesterday Once More / Hello / I Just Called To Say I Love You



MARAVILLOSO

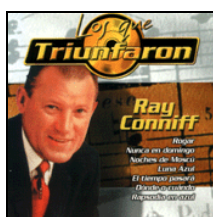
Released in Mexico on PARAMUSICA (Sony) SBCE-0823
New York, New York / Raindrops Keep Fallin' On My Head / Nadia's Theme / Green Eyes / Say It With Music / Besame Mucho / Three Coins In The Fountain / Stranger In Paradise / The Continental / Love Letters In The Sand / Beyond The Sea / Night And Day / Frenesi / Brazil / Love Is A Many-Splendored Thing



LOS ESENCIALES

(Released in Argentina in 2003, Columbia 2-493976)
Besame Mucho / Smoke Gets in Your Eyes / Somewhere My Love / Memories Are Made of This / Blue Moon / Rhapsody in Blue / Ravel's Bolero / Favorite Theme from Tchaikovsky's First Piano Concerto / Love Story / The Way We Were / Evergreen (Love Theme from "A Star Is Born") / Dueño de Nada* / Señora* / Manuela* / A Time for Us (Love Theme from "Romeo and Juliet") / New York, New York (live, from 's Always Conniff) / Unchained Melody / Green Eyes / Only You / Let It Be (*=mono)

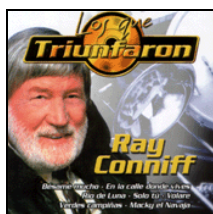
Fans who want CD's from Argentina, please write to Mr Mario Luis Locian Rossi, Sucre 2815, C 1428 DVY BUENOS AIRES, Argentina (Fax: +55(0)11-4784-6974)



LOS QUE TRIUNFARON (Spain, 2003, Pacific Music, 2 CD set)

CD # 1 (CDP-2046):

My Prayer / Never on Sunday / Smoke Gets in Your Eyes / Moscow Nights / Love Is A Many-Splendored Thing (Singers) / Blue Moon / As Time Goes By / Memories Are Made Of This (instrumental version) / Blueberry Hill / Gigi / Where Or When / Rhapsody in Blue



LOS QUE TRIUNFARON (Spain, 2003, Pacific Music, 2 CD set)

CD # 2 (CDP-1046):

Besame Mucho / On The Street Where You Live / Volare / Yellow Rose / Moon River / Only You / Moonlight Serenade / Chanson d'amour / Mack the Knife / Greenfields / The Song from Moulin Rouge / Summertime



This is a bootleg 2 CD set from Spain. (Cardboard cover shown above.) All tracks have previously been released there on other bootleg CD's with the same awful quality.



LOVE AFFAIR / SOMEWHERE MY LOVE

(Russia, May 2003, no order No.)

CD features the original albums, sequence is the same as on the official 2-on-1 released from the UK. Only the cover is different.



CONCERT IN RHYTHM, VOL. 2 / The PERFECT '10' CLASSICS

(Russia, July 2003)

Concert in Rhythm, Vol.2 is completely in mono; for *The Perfect '10' Classics* an LP was used as a source, but the quality is surprisingly good. By the way, the Russians used the international version of "Perfect Classics", which features *Ravel's Bolero*. *Moonlight Sonata* is not included. I hope that Collectables will release these two albums on a CD without flaws soon.

Deletions:

Doug found out in March 2003 that the following CDs were no longer listed in the Sony catalog:

CK 8001 - 's Awful Nice, CK 8064 - **Broadway In Rhythm**, CK 8576 - 's **Continental**, CK 44152 - **Always In My Heart**, AK 47790 - **Ray Conniff Plays Broadway**, AK 53157 - **Songs From The Big & Small Screens**. Also missing is **Pure Country** (A 26557) but that was a Ranwood/Sony Special Products release and might not have been included in the official Sony catalog. 's *Awful Nice* is still available as a 3pak with 's *Wonderful* and 's *Marvelous*. Online stores have copies in stock. The first four were available on CD for more than 14 years but it is always disappointing to see titles get deleted.

At long last I can reveal tracks details and the order No. of a 5 CD set from Reader's Digest (Mexico), which was released in 2002 (thanks to Doug Mitchell):



This set is titled **UNA CARICIA, UN SENTIMIENTO** (Readers Digest ACCD 983825), and as you can see, its cover looks exactly like the one released in Brazil and the one from Argentina. The 5 discs come in a single jewel case like the set from Argentina. However, there is no outer box. There is a leaflet listing all the songs and also a booklet with some interesting photos, including one which appears to have been taken in Mexico. (Go to the Ray Conniff Yahoo! Group on the Internet, sign in and watch them there!)

Disc 1: Aquellos Ojos Verdes / Gracias Por Los Recuerdos (21 tracks)

Green Eyes / Spanish Eyes / Granada / Vereda Tropical / Besame Mucho / Frenesi / El Condor Pasa / Pajaro Chogüi Boogie / Brazil / Tico Tico / Memoris Are Made of This (instrumental version) / Say It With Music / On the Street Where You Live (vocal version) / I Could Have Danced All Night & I've Grown Accustomed to Her Face / Cabaret / An Affair to Remember / All I Have to Do Is Dream / The Way We Were / Thanks for the Memory / One / Oklahoma!

Disc 2: Humo en tus Ojos / Canción de Amor (20 tracks)

Smoke Gets in Your Eyes / In the Still of the Night / As Time Goes By / I'll See You in My Dreams (mono) / Stompin' at the Savoy / In the Mood / Moonlight Serenade (live) / Stardust / Begin the Beguine (instrumental) / Sentimental Journey / Song of Love / Volare / Only You / Love Me Tender / Blueberry Hill / My Foolish Heart / Time on My Hands / Beyond the Sea (instrumental) / The Song from "Moulin Rouge" / The Poor People of Paris

Disc 3: Extraños en el Paraíso / Mi Oración (19 tracks)

Stranger in Paradise / Just the Way You Are / A Man and a Woman / Three Coins in the Fountain (instrumental version) / Red Roses For a Blue Lady / Love Story / The Way You Look Tonight / Love Is a Many-Splendored Thing (instrumental version) / For All We Know (from "Love Story") / Days of Wine and Roses / My Prayer / The Most Beautiful Girl / The Morning After / Mandy / Love Will Keep Us Together & How Sweet It Is to Be Loved by You / Sweet Caroline / I've Got You Under My Skin / Touch Me in the Morning / I Write the Songs (poor sound quality)

Disc 4: Cariño / Lisboa Antigua (20 tracks)

Honey / (They Long to be) Close to You / Clair / Kiss and Say Goodbye / A Horse With No Name / Unchained Melody / Can't Take My Eyes Off You / Feelings / A Taste of Honey / My Sweet Lord / Lisbon Antigua / Harbor Lights / Jamaica Farewell / Perfidia / Cuando Calienta el Sol / Softly, As in a Morning Sunrise / It Had to Be You (instrumental, mono) / The Windmills of Your Mind / The Young and the Restless (Nadia's Theme) / Lullaby of Birdland (mono)

Disc 5: Amarra Un Listón Amarillo / Rapsodia en Azul (21 tracks)

I'll Never Fall in Love Again (from "Bridge Over Troubled Water") / Where Is the Love / Tie a Yellow Ribbon Round the Ole Oak Tree / MacArthur Park / Winchester Cathedral / Spinning Wheel / Aquarius & Let the Sunshine In / Georgy Girl / Blowin' in the Wind / By the Time I Get to Phoenix / Do You Know the Way to San Jose? / Bah Bah Conniff sprach (Zarathustra) / A Time for Us (Love Theme from "Romeo and Juliet") / Melody from Mozart / Theme from Tchaikovsky's Swan Lake Ballet (mono) / Favorite Theme from Tchaikovsky's First Piano Concerto (mono) / Schubert's Serenade / Warsaw Concerto / A Bit of Beethoven / Conniff's Dance of the Hours / Rhapsody in Blue



SPANISH EYES – Various Artists

Bert Kaempfert would have been 80 on October 16, 2003. In order to celebrate this event, this CD, featuring 24 renditions of one of his most successful melodies was released on October 16, 2003 (Bear Family Records BCD 16674 AH):

From the Bert Kaempfert website: "One of the most successful songs by German musician Bert Kaempfert was – and still is – *Spanish Eyes*. Its journey towards becoming an evergreen was by no means predictable. Instead, its triumphal march around the world proved to be long and laborious. Kaempfert's *Spanish Eyes* went round the world and was released in over 500 different versions: including those sung

and played by world famous interpreters and orchestra leaders such as Andy Williams, Johnny Mathis, Billy Vaughn and **Ray Conniff**. That must be a record. There are also various printed editions, ranging from concertina arrangements to ones for a Russian balalaika ensemble complete with domra and bayan. *Spanish Eyes* received numerous awards and today, along with Kaempfert's most popular song *Strangers In The Night*, it is among the hundred most successful hits of the 20th century. In October 2003, Bear Family Records released a CD with 24 remarkable versions of *Moon Over Naples (Spanish Eyes)*. The exciting story of the complicated launch of this evergreen has been documented in a comprehensive booklet.

Last minute CD News: Released in Argentina on the *Barca Discos* label: Ray Conniff, su Orquesta y Coro, Vol. 1 (Barca Discos EP 6011) and Ray Conniff, su Orquesta y Coro, Vol. 2 (Barca Discos EP 6014). These are bootleg CD's of inferior quality. The 32 tracks have been released on several bootlegs from Spain. Full details in the next edition.

New and forthcoming CD's featuring Ray Conniff backings:



This CD was mentioned in the last edition already. However, here are more details:

THE BEST OF EILEEN RODGERS

features the following 13 backings by Ray Conniff: *Miracle of Love*, *Give Me*, *Don't Call Me Sweetie* ('Cause I'm Bitter), *Third Finger - Left Hand**, *Just a Little Bit More*, *Now Is the Time*, *I Had to Lose You to Love You*, *Some of These Days*, *This Day*, *I Wish I Didn't Have to Dream So Far*, *Crazy Dream**, *I'm Not Afraid Anymore*, *You're Wrong All Wrong***. (Total: 24 tracks.) Collector's Choice CCM03792, released in May 2003 [binaural (two channel) stereo, **true stereo]



LP cover ↑
CD cover artwork not yet available

Collectables are planning a new CD by **DON CHERRY**. It will feature his album **"SWINGIN' FOR TWO"**. There will also be seven bonus tracks drawn from Don's singles output. (Collectables COL-CD ???? / Sony A-70260) Tracks marked * are backed by Ray Conniff:

(*Swingin' For Two*, original catalog No. CL 893:) For You*, Love Is Just Around the Corner*, I Didn't Know About You*, My Future Just Passed*, Sleepy Time Gal* (recorded April 19, 1956), When The Sun Comes Out*, I'm Gonna Sit Right Down And Write Myself A Letter*, Please Be Kind*, I Don't Care If The Sun Don't Shine* (recorded April 20, 1956), I'll String Along With You*, So Rare*, I'm Yours* (recorded on 23, 1956) / (Singles:) Give Me More* (April 23, 1956), If I Had My Druthers, The Story of Sherry (with David Terry, July 19, 1956), There's A Place Called Heaven*, Don't You Worry Your Pretty Little Head* (November 26, 1956), The Last Dance, April Age (with Percy Faith, Dec. 18, 1956). Check out Collectables' website www.oldies.com for release date.

THE COMPLETE JOAN WEBER ON COLUMBIA

Cover artwork not yet available

This Collectables CD will feature at least two backings by Ray Conniff: *Goodbye Lollipops*, *Hello Lipstick* and *What Should A Teen-Heart Do?* (Let's keep our fingers crossed it will also feature the unreleased *Rock Talk*.) This CD is to be released in early 2004.



JILL COREY: "Sometimes I'm Happy, Sometimes I'm Blue"

(Collectables Records COL 7585, release date: November 25, 2003)

This CD has 18 tracks and features one of the two* backings that Ray Conniff did for Jill Corey, NOBODY'S HEART. (*The other one is "Look! Look!".)



MERV GRIFFIN: THE COMPLETE COLUMBIA RECORDINGS

This Collectables CD (COL 7553, release date: November 4, 2004) features Ray Conniff's only backing for Merv Griffin, which was recorded in July 1955, titled (*I Couldn't Get the Hang of*) *The Merengue*.

Ray Conniff Karaoke Discs

Warning: Don't let these video discs fool you. Although Ray's name is stated on their covers, do not expect to see any videos of Ray. These are just two chosen from many others, which also feature Christmas songs (e.g. "Away in a Manger") "in the style of Ray Conniff".

The Collection of Romantic Songs VCD Karaoke, Vol. 3, SGEKV903EM (USA): Nat King Cole - When I Fall In Love / The Platters - Smoke Gets In Your Eyes / Eddie Floyd - Feeling / Richard Sander-son - Reality / Elvis Presley - Are You Lonesome Tonight / Lionel Richie - Say You, Say Me / Helen Reddy - I Don't Know How to Love Him / Hermun's Hermit - The End of The World / Eddy Arnold - I Really Don't Want To Know / Billy Ocean - Suddenly / The Carpenters - We've Only Just Begun / **Ray Conniff - Somewhere My Love** / The Platters - Only You / Debby Boone - You Light Up My Life / Mary Macgregor - Torn Between Two Lovers / Shakin's Stevens - Because I Love You

Hits of the Decades (60's), Vol. 15 features 14 professionally recorded karaoke sound tracks with background video clips (not original artists!). (Quoted from an advertising text featured on the Internet.) This VCD also features "Somewhere My Love" in the style of Ray Conniff.

In the last edition I already mentioned the possibility of a 2 CD set titled **THE ESSENTIAL RAY CONNIFF**. Actually, this set was to be released in the USA (and probably world-wide) on September 16, but at the moment it seems it is postponed until 2004. In June, Michael Leach drew my attention to an article that was featured in "In Tune" (No. 136), a publication from the UK, and later to another one in edition No. 137, which both were about the forthcoming CD set. Here is article No. 1 which was headed

Stateside with Robert W. Rice

Although full details have not as yet been solidified, Didier [Deutsch] wanted to mention a brand new tribute to the late Ray Conniff being readied. Ray died on October 12 of last year, following a fall. He had suffered a stroke in April, but had been in otherwise fair health. Until 1956, when he introduced "S Wonderful" his first innovative album for COLUMBIA, he had been a 'behind the scenes' guy, whose sharp arrangements had been the vehicles for the bands of the 40's, and the vocalists of the 50's. His credits go back to 1937, when he played trombone with Bunny Berigan. Music styles were changing in 1956, so it was all the more important to take note of his success, at bringing standards into the equation, but this time with the modern beat. In the late 50's and on into the 60's and 70's, his imaginative style was homogenizing the new rhythms, for the more conservative over 30 crowd. He created more than 100 albums in this genre with 25 of them making the best seller list. His recording of SOMEWHERE MY LOVE won him a Grammy in 1966, during the hard-core years of the Beatles. I have only scratched the surface in describing the impact of Conniff during his long and prestigious career, so that it was not surprising that Didier Deutsch would pick up on the idea, of producing a special commemorative, essentially highlighting this reborn area of his career. In an unexpected development, Didier found enthusiastic cooperation from Ray's daughter Tamara. She became excited with the opportunity, of producing a meaningful anthology of her father's work, and presenting it as a touching tribute to him. Of course with the above credentials, and in terms of mere volume alone, where does one begin to pare down the candidates? This was not a single manoeuvre, of simply

All about "THE ESSENTIAL RAY CONNIFF", a forthcoming 2 CD set

throwing a handful of titles into a hat, and drawing out a potpourri. If anything, selecting an overall 'best of' becomes a virtual impossibility. How does one adequately cover such a huge inventory, and still satisfy the Conniff fan base without risking the possibility of overlooking a title of essential consequence. Like any serious project of this kind, Didier and Tamara have spent hours, going over Ray's massive catalog, so as to do honour to the man, while creating a keepsake for his many admirers. The final package has not as yet been worked out, and for that reason a preview of the contents cannot be published at this time. It will however be featured here, as an exclusive when it does become settled.

A month later, article No. 2 was published:

Stateside with Robert W. Rice

The tribute to the new Ray Conniff two-disc anthology has been completed by Didier Deutsch, Darcy M. Proper, and Ray's daughter, Tamara. As I reported here last month the compilation is to be an overview, of the Conniff genius, which cut through the P & R veil of popularity in the 50s, 60s and 70s. Thanks to Didier, the preview of those tracks is being provided as a special exclusive, prior to its release on September 16. This opportunity is greatly appreciated.

Tracks featured and dates as supposed to be featured on the set are as follows:

'S WONDERFUL, from "'s Wonderful" (mono), recorded on June 15, 1956, / **WALKIN' AND WHISTLIN'** (collector's item; this is a Ray Conniff original, featuring Ray, whistling; it was released on a single only, side B was "Melodies for Two Guitars"); recorded on January 30, 1957, / **THE WAY YOU LOOK TONIGHT**, from "'s Marvelous", recorded on August 29, 1957, / **FAVOURITE THEME FROM TCHAIKOVSKY'S 1st PIANO CONCERTO / EARLY EVENING**, both from "Concert in Rhythm", recorded on January 17, 1958 / **SMOKE GETS IN YOUR EYES**, from "'s Awful Nice", recorded on March 23, 1958, / **SOUTH OF THE BORDER**, from "Conniff Meets Butterfield" (Billy Butterfield, trumpet), recorded on March 4 1959, / **GREENSLEEVES** (What Child Is This), from "Christmas With Conniff", recorded on August 27, 1959, / **WARSAW CONCERTO**, from "Concert in Rhythm, Vol. II", recorded on December 8, 1959, / **BRAZIL**, from "Say It With Music", recorded on March 23, 1960, / **MID-**

NIGHT LACE (parts 1 & 2), (Note: Part 1 was included in the "Happiness Is" album, whereas Part 2 was only available as flip side of the single featuring both parts), recorded on September 8, 1960, / **MEMORIES ARE MADE OF THIS**, from "Memories Are Made Of This", recorded on September 13, 1960, / **AFRICAN SAFARI**, from "s Continental", recorded on December 6, 1961, / **SCARLET** (another collector's item, which was only released on a special Columbia Record Club LP, and a single, whose other side featured "Popsy"), recorded on January 17, 1963, / **SWEET SUE, JUST YOU**, from "Happiness Is", recorded on during the sessions for the "Just Kiddin' Around" on February 27, 1963, / **BLUE MOON**, which was featured on the "Happiness Is" album, recorded on December 6, 1963, / **INVISIBLE TEARS**, from "Invisible Tears", recorded on May 15, 1964, / **HAPPINESS IS**, from "Happiness Is", recorded on May 3, 1965, / **HELLO DOLLY**, from "Ray Conniff's World Of Hits", recorded on March 22, 1966, / **SOMEWHERE MY LOVE**, from "Somewhere My Love", recorded on March 23, 1966, / **SEVENTEEN** (flip side of a single featuring "The World Will Smile Again", which was released on the "This Is My Song" album, whereas "Seventeen" has never been released on an album or CD), recorded on February 9, 1967, / **WINDS OF CHANGE**, from the soundtrack album of "How to Save a Marriage and Ruin Your Life", recorded on May 9, 1967, / **TINY BUBBLES**, from "Ray Conniff's Hawaiian Album", recorded on June 13, 1967, / **A BANDA** (another collector's item which was only released on a single, with "La Felicidad" on side B), recorded on April 26, 1969, / **A TIME FOR US**, from "Jean", recorded on July 8, 1969, / **THE POWER OF LOVE**, from "Jean", recorded on July 9, 1969, / **THEME FROM LOVE STORY (Where Do I Begin)**, from "Love Story", recorded on January 23, 1971, / **WITH EVERY BEAT OF MY HEART** (this was only released on a single; it features a great vocal solo by Ray; the original single had "Sleepy Shores" as its flip side), recorded on June 23, 1971, / **I'D LIKE TO TEACH THE WORLD TO SING**, from "I'd Like to Teach the World to Sing"), recorded on December 1971, / **SPEAK SOFTLY LOVE**, from "Love Theme from 'The Godfather'", recorded on March 21, 1972, / **SOMEONE**, from "Bridge Over Troubled Water", recorded on February 17, 1970, / **HARMONY**, from "Harmony", recorded on May 14, 1973, / **LOVE THEME FROM AN X RATED MOVIE** and **MY LITTLE FRIEND**, both recorded on February 17, 1975 (note: Both tracks were released on one single; "Love Theme

from an X-Rated Movie" - also titled "Duck Walk" -, a Ray Conniff composition, was never released on an album, whereas "My Little Friend" was released on the "Love Will Keep Us Together" album / **NEW YORK, NEW YORK**, from "Say You Say Me", recorded on March 10 / 11, 1986, / **MY WAY** (live, Ray Conniff vocal solo, previously unreleased and from the private collection of Tamara Conniff, recorded on in Brazil on September 7, 1998.

In addition to Didier, Darcy and Tamara, a special thanks also goes to Jeff Jones. By the way, Tamara assured to me that all tracks - with the exception of the first two, which were recorded in genuine mono - would be in stereo on this set.

Doug wrote on his website:

This 2-CD set was scheduled to be released by Sony Music on September 16, 2003. It was prepared by Didier Deutsch, Darcy Proper, and Tamara Conniff with additional input by Manfred Thönicke. Fans will immediately notice the number of "rare singles" (non-album tracks) that appear in this collection. They include Walkin' And Whistlin', Midnight Lace Part II, Scarlet, Seventeen, Winds Of Change (also released on the movie soundtrack LP), A Banda, With Every Beat Of My Heart, and Love Theme From An X-Rated Movie. Actually, two-thirds of the songs on this collection were released on 45rpm singles in the USA but most also appeared on Ray's original albums. Not as obvious may be the number of Ray's original compositions included here: Walkin' And Whistlin', Early Evening, African Safari, Scarlet, The Power Of Love, With Every Beat Of My Heart, Someone, and Love Theme From An X-Rated Movie. Overall, the songs appear in the order they were recorded. Some of the published dates are incorrect so I won't reproduce them here until the CD is released. One worth noting is Someone which was recorded in 1970, not in 1972. The song should appear after The Power Of Love. My Way is most likely a vocal solo Ray performed at a concert in Brazil. One such performance was broadcast on television from the Free Open Air Concert at Ibirapuera Park, São Paulo. However, the date does not correspond with that concert.

We will have to wait and see if all the errors will be corrected. Hopefully, I can feature its cover and further product information in the next edition of 's Conniff. Meanwhile, check out my and Doug's Ray Conniff Internet pages for any news updates.

- Manfred

Hello, my dear friends,

Please take a seat, relax and enjoy a ride in my time machine that will take you back to 1964, which was a very important year for our maestro Ray Conniff. Again, he recorded three albums. They were "Friendly Persuasion" (his 14th orchestra-and-chorus album), and two magic albums with the Ray Conniff Singers, "Invisible Tears" and "Love Affair" (Nos. 7 and 8 in the list of albums by the Singers). However, 1964 was also an important year for Ray, because he signed a new contract with Columbia / CBS Records, which meant he would be exclusively recording for this company for the five years to come.

Besides the above mentioned recordings, Ray would also do two TV shows. During 1964 he also went to Hawaii and Japan on vacations.

So, as you can see, 1964 was a very interesting and eventful year for Ray.

In those days, both the Ray Conniff Orchestra and Chorus and the Ray Conniff Singers were equally successful, so Ray made recordings using both his styles and sounds in turns. As the last album was one by the Singers ("Speak to Me of Love"), he prepared another one by the Orchestra and Chorus in the spring of 1964, which was titled

FRIENDLY PERSUASION



The recording sessions took place in Los Angeles from May 13th to 15th. It is interesting to learn how Ray's schedule of an ordinary working day was, way back then: He got up at 6.30 a.m., had breakfast and worked pretty steadily all day, taking time out for meals, and that is about all. He never accepted any social engagements during times when he was preparing an album, as he had a tight schedule. He just spent very quiet evenings at home during his period of working on albums and arrangements. (I am sure he followed

this pattern until his very last albums, such as "'s Country" and "Do Ray para o Rei".)

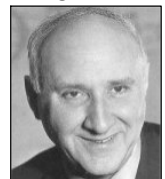
During the recording sessions of "Friendly Persuasion", Ray experimented with a new stereo set-up. It utilized four trombones, four men singers and tuba on the left, and five trumpets, four girl singers and piccolo on the right. (Note: No saxes were used during these!) "Tiger Rag" and "Ebb Tide" are good examples, but so was "June Night", which had the chorus sing lyrics for the first time in an "instrumental" album.

The repertoire of "Friendly Persuasion"

Once again, for this orchestra-and-chorus album, Ray chose twelve standards or songs which had been successful in recent years.

"**Tiger Rag (Hold That Tiger)**" is the first track of the album, which demonstrates the new stereo set-up described above, wonderfully. I remember that in the mid sixties, that track by Ray had a lot of airplay in France, but also in the UK and Germany. The counter-play of tuba and piccolo are really very imaginative and humorous. I guess the piccolo was played by John Lowe. "Tiger Rag" is a tune that is credited to the Original Dixieland Jazz Band. In fact, it was composed in 1889 by Nick La Rocca, a New Orleans native. He was the cornetist, leader and manager of that Original Dixieland Jazz Band. Besides "Tiger Rag", he wrote many other well-remembered tunes, such as "Fidgety Feet". Until 1925 he toured the US as well as Europe. After disbanding he was in the building business from 1938 to 1958. He died in New Orleans in 1961.

"**High Noon (Do Not Forsake Me)**" features the "clip-clop" sounds of an imaginary horse, which is very fitting, as this is the theme song of a western movie, as you all will know. Ray's version (also featuring the new stereo set-up is just perfect). Frankie Laine had a big hit with this song. It was written by **Dimitri Tiomkin** (see picture), with lyrics by Ned Washington. Did you know that in 1988 Didier Deutsch wrote in the liner notes for a CD titled "The Film Music of Dimitri Tiomkin" that it was the song that saved the film? Here is an excerpt from that write-up: "In fact, much of 'High Noon' film's success initially depended on Tiomkin's popular song. 'Do Not Forsake Me Oh My Darling,' heard throughout the film in classic Greek chorus fashion to punctuate the action and give it its momentum, it was Frankie Laine's rendition of the tune that apparently saved the picture from total disaster. In his autobiography, 'Please Don't Hate Me', Tiomkin himself explained what happened in these terms: 'High Noon' had a preview in a town near Los Angeles. It was a flop. Film experts agreed that the picture, music and all, was a flat failure ... the producers



hesitated to release it. It might never reach the theaters. I tried to salvage something ... I would see if I could make anything from the song on phonograph records. A flop song from a film fiasco didn't look very promising, but there was no harm trying. The record company that handled Tex Ritter [who performed the song on the soundtrack] wasn't interested, at least not at first ... I persuaded another company to issue the song with Frankie Laine. The record was an immediate success, one of the hits of the year ... the picture was released four months after, and packed the theaters. The success of the record promoted it. Why had 'High Noon' got such an unfavorable reception at the preview? Picture business is full of such puzzles ..."

The Frankie Laine record had a triumph in 1952, and so had Dimitri Tiomkin: He won his first two Oscars in the same year, for best score and best song.

Tiomkin was born in St. Petersburg in 1894. He first moved to Berlin, then to the US in 1929. He was an inspired composer who wrote many scores for westerns, such as "Rio Bravo", "The Unforgiven", and "Gunfight at the O.K. Corral". His contributions to other movies included scores for "Return to Paradise", "The High and the Mighty" (for which he won another Oscar in 1954), "Guns of Navarone" and "55 Days in Peking". At last, I must not forget his score for "The Alamo", which featured the beautiful song "The Green Leaves of Summer"; which Ray Conniff recorded for his "Somebody Loves Me"-album with his Singers.

After the death of his wife, Dimitri Tiomkin left Hollywood in 1968, and spent the rest of his years partly in Paris, and partly in London, where he died in 1979, at the age of 85.

The title song of Ray Conniff's new album also came from the pen of Dimitri Tiomkin, who had written "**Friendly Persuasion (Thee I Love)**" in 1956 for the William Wyler film of the same name.

"**Ebb Tide**" and "**Shangri-La**" both feature harp solos by Stella Castellucci, and to me that only is natural, because both were written by a genius of the harp, Robert Maxwell. To me, Ray's rendition of "Shangri-La" is really outstanding. Let me give you some background information on Robert Maxwell.

He was a New York native, born in 1921. He had an early interest in the instrument, his name became a synonym for the harp. By the way, his two brothers also became experts on that instrument.

Like Ray Conniff, Bob Maxwell received his musical education at the Juillard School of Music in New York.

In the late '30s, at the age of 17, Bob performed with the NBC Symphony Orchestra under the baton of the well-known Arturo Toscanini.



After WWII, he played on the radio, at theaters, night clubs (such as "The Blue Angel" in New York), and hotels (such as the "Hotel Blackstone" in Chicago). In the '50s he recorded many albums for the MGM label.

"**Ebb Tide**", his fabulous composition, might have been inspired by the time he spent with the coast guards during his service in the army. It was a big hit for British orchestra leader Frank Chacksfield in 1953, which climbed the charts to No. 2. Maybe, you remember it when I tell you that in the background you could hear the sounds of seagulls and waves. This song has been recorded by many orchestras, including David Rose, Billy Vaughn, Percy Faith, André Kostelanetz, Mantovani and many others... Ray's rendition features a beautiful trumpet solo by Dick Cathcart, who is not shown in the picture on the back cover of the album.

"**Shangri-La**" first became popular in 1946. In 1953, Jackie Gleason recorded that song for his album "Music, Martini and Memories". In 1964, Maxwell signed a contract with the Decca label and recorded a new version of "Shangri-La", which became a hit in the USA. It was recorded by Ray Conniff while it was still in the charts. Like "Ebb Tide", this song by Bob Maxwell was recorded by many orchestras, including those of Hugo Winterhalter, Jerry Murad and his Harmonicats, Manuel and the Music of the Mountains, and the Johnny Mann Singers and many others.

When Robert Maxwell was with the Decca label in the '60s, his orchestra was conducted by a certain Nick Perito, the same leader who in the '90s conducted the Percy Faith Orchestra on its Japan Tours and with which he recorded four albums with music arranged by Percy Faith. Of course, the repertoire also included "Ebb Tide".

"**June Night**" also features the new stereo set-up. It also surprises the listeners in those times because the 4 men and 4 girl singers sang the words right in the middle of the track. Other than that, the whole album is instrumental. As Manfred once wrote, I agree that "June Night" must have paved the way for future Singers' albums during which a full orchestra was used for backing, e.g. on the "Somewhere My Love" album.

"**Song of Love**" is a really swinging track, great for dancing. To many listeners the theme might sound familiar. In fact, it is the main theme from Franz Schubert's "Unfinished Symphony", which

was adapted by **Sigmund Romberg** (see picture). Here is a portrait of that composer:



Like "Lover, Come Back to Me" (recorded by Ray for the "Speak to Me of Love"-album), "Song of Love" came from one of Romberg's ca. 50 Broadway shows, all in the operetta vein, and have survived them.

Sigmund Romberg was born in Hungary on 29th July 1887. He studied music in Vienna, where he spent most of his youth. But he also studied engineering.

With the blessing of his parents, he left Europe for the American Dream in 1909 and went to New York. As he did not speak English, he could not find a job, but fortunately, a cousin got him one at a pencil factory.

Soon, he was hired as a pianist in a Hungarian restaurant. Within a year he took many jobs like that one. His talent soon was acknowledged and he was asked to join the Shubert publishers as one of the staff composers.

His first show was titled "Whirl of the World" (December 1913). It was very well received and followed by a string of music for revues, musical comedies and films. Here is a list of highlights in his career:

The Broadway show "Maytime" (1917) featured the evergreen "Will You Remember". In 1921, he created a show whose plot was based on the life of Franz Schubert, and from it came - as you may have guessed already - "Song of Love". This production established him as an operetta composer, and after that success, Romberg decided to move to Los Angeles, where he composed both operettas and shows, including "The Student Prince" in 1924 (which featured "Drinking Song", "Deep in My Heart, Dear", and "Serenade"), "The Desert Song" in 1926, a story of romance and intrigue in

Morocco (featuring "Riff Song", "The Desert Song", and "One Alone"). "The New Moon", produced in 1928, was set in the New Orleans of 1792. It included "Softly, as in a Morning Sunrise" (which Ray Conniff recorded for his "Say It With Music"-album) and the above mentioned "Lover, Come Back to Me".

Many of these shows were turned into film musicals. Although Romberg's music represented more or less the style of Viennese operettas, it was adapted for North American taste.

He also wrote music for some movies, which included "Viennese Nights" (1930) and "The Night is Young" (1935), which included a song, Ray Conniff and Billy Butterfield performed on the "Just Kiddin' Around"-album: "When I Grow Too Old to Dream".

His lyricists included Otto Harbach, Oscar Hammerstein II and Dorothy Fields.

With his own orchestra he toured the country, and on radio he had his own show, titled "An Evening with Romberg". He also recorded for the Victor label.

He was one of the founding members of ASCAP (the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers). Sigmund Romberg dies in New York on November 9, 1951 of a cerebral haemorrhage. In 1954, a biographical film titled "Deep in My Heart" was made, with Jose Ferrer as Sigmund Romberg.

Many great artists played the music of Romberg, including Mantovani, Melachrino, Paul Weston, Carmen Dragon, and André Kostelanetz. Percy Faith devoted a complete album to his music, featuring vocal solos by Earl Wrightson and Lois Hunt.

OK, let's go back to the repertoire of Ray Conniff's "Friendly Persuasion"-album:

"So Rare" features a fine piano solo by Bob Ralston. The song was written by Jerry Herst. "So Rare" was a hit for Jimmy Dorsey in the '50s. By the way, this was the second arrangement wrote of this song. Almost ten years ago he arranged it for singer Don Cherry. It was included in the Cherry / Conniff-album "Swingin' For Two".

"April Love" originated from a movie, whose score was composed by Sammy Fain, who also wrote "Love Is a Many-Splendored Thing", "That Old feeling", and "I'll Be Seeing You" - all of which Ray recorded for his early albums. (Sorry for some incorrect information about Fain in part XXII, featured in 's Conniff No. 3/1996 on page 23.)

"Stompin' At The Savoy", a standard that belongs to the repertoire of all the great orchestras, including that of Benny Goodman. It is wonderfully presented by Ray in his unique shuffle beat manner.

"I Understand" was composed by Mabel Wayne, who also wrote "Ramona", which Ray recorded on his "Always in My Heart"-album. Wayne also wrote "In a Little Spanish Town", and "It Happened in Monterey". Ray's version of "I Understand" features a nice piano solo by Bob Ralston.

The album ends with a fine trombone solo by Ray Conniff on "**Rose Room**", a big band standard. It means a "twinkling of an eye" to the Swing Era, when Ray played with Bobby Hackett. In fact, he was in the 8 man band when "Rose Room" was recorded on December 23, 1943, along with 9 other tracks. That recording and Ray's 1964 arrangement sound very similar. The basic difference is the chorus, of course.

Now let's have a look at the musicians and singers Ray used on "Friendly Persuasion":

Like on the back cover of the previous album, "Speak to Me of Love", there is this fantastic photo of the musicians, singers and staff who realised the album.

The Musicians

On guitar again we have - like on "Speak to Me of Love" and "You Make Me Feel So Young" - Al Hendrickson, as well as Howert Roberts. On saxophones there were three old buddies of Ray



Conniff: John Lowe, John Bambridge, and Ted Romersa as well as Abe Most, and Fred Fallensby. On trumpet there were Conrad Gozzo, Dick Cathcart, Jimmie Zito, and Ollie Mitchell. Solo piano: Bob Ralston; organ and piano II: Jimmy Rowles; percussion: Wally Snow; bass: Phil Stephens; drums: Milt Holland; trombones: Ernie Tack, Ed Kusby, Joe Howard, and Ray Conniff; harp: Stella Castellucci.

The Singers

I have given you information about the 8 singers previously. They were: Loulie Jean Norman, Patricia Collier, B.J. Baker, and Vangie Carmichael. The men singers were Jay Meyer, Verne Rowe, and Jimmy Joyce. The fourth guy was Gene Merlino, who was described in "Conniff & Rhythm" in 1965 as follows: "[He] sings baritone

in the Ray Conniff Singers. Gene came to Los Angeles from San Francisco in 1954. He has sung with various bands - Ray Anthony, Frankie Carle, Freddie Martin, Dick Stabile and Fran DeVol. Gene recorded "This Could Be The Night" with the Ray Anthony Band (Capitol) from the movie of the same name. He also appeared in the movie "Sunday in New York" as a vocal soloist." Gene Merlino often rejoined Ray and his "gang" throughout the years. He also was among the singers when Ray's fourth Christmas album, "s Christmas" was recorded in 1999. For more details, please read his portrait in this edition.

The Staff

Besides the usual producer Ernie Altschuler and the production supervisor Bob Ballard, we can see for the first time Ernest Chapman, the engineer mentioned on "The Happy Beat"-album, in the picture.

The World-Wide Release of "Friendly Persuasion".

As for the release date, a couple of sources list different dates. According to the Schwann Long Playing Record Catalogue, "Friendly Persuasion" was released in the USA in September / October 1964, but "Conniff & Rhythm" (Lois Holland's club magazine) stated in Volume No. 17 on page 14 that it was released on 14th February 1965. (Perhaps some of my readers know which date is correct.) I know for sure that in Europe the album was released almost one year after its recording in May 1964 in April 1965, three months after the release of "Invisible Tears", which was recorded in

August 1964. I guess that "Friendly Persuasion" was held back because "Invisible Tears" turned out to be a big hit.



Title variations: In France, the album was re-titled "*Pour Toi Seule*" (meaning "for you alone", see cover shown here).

In Brazil they followed the tradition of naming Ray's albums with an expression beginning with "s". They simply titled the new album "*s Persuasion*".



The cover photo of "Friendly Persuasion" strongly reminds us of an album by Les Baxter, "Voices in Rhythm", released in 1962, which you can see here, doesn't it?

Ray's album stayed in the US charts as follows: Among the Billboard Top 150 LP Charts it was for 5 weeks, peaking at No. 141. In the Cash Box Charts it stayed among the top 100 LP's for 8 weeks, reaching its best position at No. 70.

The next part of my Ray Conniff Story will be about the recordings of two albums by the Singers, "Invisible Tears" and "Love Affair". Till next time. Yours,

Serge Elhaik

Dear Serge, thank you for taking me way back to 1964 with your magical time machine. I thoroughly enjoyed the trip. Here are two e-mails which belong here, because one is about a slight error in your last part, and the other one includes a comment on the above mentioned album by Les Baxter. Again, thanks a lot for your efforts. - Manfred

Hi Manfred,
Have just received 'S CONNIF No.1/2003. Wonderful as always, especially because the focus in Serge Elhaik's Ray Conniff Story was on SPEAK TO ME OF LOVE, one of my favorite Singers albums. A correction, though: Serge stated that in Brazil it was called 'S LOVELY!, however SPEAK TO ME OF LOVE was never released in Brazil and 'S LOVELY was in fact the Brazilian title of SO MUCH IN LOVE. Jorje Carpes

Hi Manfred,
Thanks for the wonderful last issue (3/2002) and for the e-mail updates. I really appreciate both! Your mentioning of the Les Baxter "Voices In

Rhythm" album brought to mind the whole arena of Ray Conniff "Sound-Alike" recordings. Thinking back, I remember the Luther Henderson Columbia recordings (which have now been reissued on CD by Collectables) "Clap Hands", which had that "Conniff Beat". Just the other day I received a 3-CD set "Music To Lounge By...66 Easy Listening Favorites" on the Disky label, offered by Time-Life in the US. On this set is a selection by the Dave Pell orchestra & voices, "This Could Be The Start Of Something Big". It is performed in the classic Conniff style (arrangement). I remember at least one album on the market in the 60's by Dave Pell and I suspect other selections from that album are in the same style. If you want to stretch the point just a bit, even the Kirby Stone Four (Columbia) have the orchestra & "du-du, du-ahs" which are reminiscent, again, of Ray's signature sound. I also remember, as a member of the Columbia Record Club for many years in the past, they would issue custom collection packages of instrumental music in which there were many selections arranged to sound very much like the Conniff sound. I believe (without checking) that these recordings were made by several of the familiar "custom music" conductor / arrangers in England. Many of these same conductor / arrangers were heard on the Living Strings series as well as British label Easy Listening releases. Many of these orchestras can be heard today on the Music Choice digital satellite music service used by many cable TV systems as well as Direct TV. Speaking of that music service, just yesterday, I happened to be listening when, on the Easy Listening channel, they played a selection from the Perry La Marca, "Hopelessly Romantic" CD. I don't know if this has been a part of their rotation for some time or if this is something new. It was the first time I had heard Perry's music on

this outlet, but I may have just missed it until now. Anyway, back to the Conniff sound-alikes, I wonder if others could suggest other Conniff sound-alike artists & you could compile a list of specific titles & labels as well as availability? Thanks, Manfred. Don Fritz, LA

Well, Don (and everybody else), this could be a topic worth discussing in the Ray Conniff discussion board at

http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ray_conniff/

YAHOO! Groups

Have YOU joined yet? It is easy to become a member, and absolutely free. Once you can sign in, you have access to rare pictures, and can take part in the discussions. If you do not want to become a member, then you can only read the messages, which is also very interesting, though.



In the latest part of the Ray Conniff Story, focusing on "Friendly Persuasion", Serge Elhaik mentioned singer Gene Merlino. After Ray had passed away a year ago, Gene got in touch with me and wrote, "Dear Manfred: First off, let me introduce myself, although I think we might have met at O Henry's studio during Ray's Xmas album, for which I contracted all the voices, back in July of '99. Like yourself, we were all shocked at Ray's sudden passing. He was always so full of energy and drive, one had the feeling he was almost indestructible!"

Well, unfortunately, we never met, as I arrived at the recording studio after both albums, "'s Country" and "'s Christmas" had been recorded. My wife and I, however, had the pleasure to watch and listen to Ray when he recorded his trombone solos for those albums. Only one day prior, Gene had taken those wonderful photographs of the Ray Conniff Singers, both old and new, which never made it into the CD booklet of "'s Christmas." They can be watched, though, on the Internet. Just pay a visit to Doug Mitchell's Ray Conniff Page.

The last time I featured portraits of former Ray Conniff Singers in 's *Conniff*, was in edition No. 3/2001. They were about Jackie Ward and the Bahler Brothers. This time I have the honor of presenting Gene Merlino, who had worked with Ray throughout a couple of decades. Let him tell you details about his career himself:

"I first started working for Ray in the early 60's and must have sung on at least a dozen albums, at the same time contracting the voices on several. It was always hard work with Ray, but once through the albums one felt a real sense of accomplishment. As you know, he was a real perfectionist!

I got your E-mail address from Perry La Marca at the tribute for Ray, where Perry played keyboards for the choir which I was a part of. We sang "The Lord's Prayer" and "Ave Maria", and I'm sure Ray would have been both proud and pleased with the performance. It was indeed a very touching and moving memorial.

Manfred, I read with great interest the article in the Fan Club Magazine on Jackie Ward and the Bahler Bros. As a studio singer in LA for over 40 years I had occasion to work with them many, many times. I introduced Jackie to Anita Kerr when Anita decided to replace her alto in the Quartet on the Smothers Brothers TV show, and Jackie ultimately became a regular with us.



The following year the Quartet won a "Grammy" award for the best Vocal Group, winning out over some very famous groups including the Mamas and the Papas, etc. The next year we also won the prestigious Edison award of Europe for a Burt Bacharach album we did. John Bahler became our tenor for the "LA Voices", which I also contracted. This group also received a Grammy nomination for the best Vocal Jazz Group in the early 80's. Tom Bahler, I also worked with many times. A very multi-talented brother combination!"

Here is a partial list of Gene's accomplishments over the past 30+ years:

Extensive studio work as a singer since the 60's, performing and recording with such stars as Red Skelton, Dinah Shore, Dean Martin, Jerry Lewis, Andy Williams, Donny

& Marie and Carol Burnett, and others.

Principal on the Sonny & Cher Show for six years.

He sang on many TV themes, including RAW-HIDE, DAVY CROCKETT, ROADRUNNER, ALIEN NATION and GILLIGAN'S ISLAND.

He also sang and played (sax and clarinet) on many name bands, including Les Brown, Harry James, and Billy Vaughn. He was the "Voice" of Franco Nero who played Lancelot in the movie "CAMELOT". Other movie credits include SOUTH PACIFIC, THE SOUND OF MUSIC, WEST SIDE STORY, THE LITTLE MERMAID, ETC.

As a Vocal Coach, he worked with Bette Midler, Melissa Gilbert, Pia Zadora, and Eddie Fisher (for his recent "comeback" album). He recorded with such stars as Elvis Presley, Michael Jackson, Frank Sinatra, Barbra Streisand, Dean Martin, Jerry Lewis, Henry Mancini, and many others. Gene worked under top Hollywood composers such as Bill Conti, Henry Mancini, John Williams, James Horner, Alfred Newman, Victor Young, Ken Darby, etc. He also coached the "Kids of the Kingdom" at Disneyland and toured as soloist with Burt Bacharach for two years on extended road concerts featuring the music from all of Burt's movies. He is currently performing with the Grammy-nominated Jazz group, "L. A. Voices and Supersax".

What an impressive list! Again, this is proof of the fact that Ray did not choose just anybody for his group but singers with talent and experience. Thanks a lot for providing all these details, Gene.



The 2003 Ray Conniff Fan Club Convention in Berlin took place from Friday, May 16th to Sunday, May 18th. It was a huge success – maybe it was the best Convention ever. We were a company of about 50 people from many corners of the world. Fans came from South Africa, the USA (California), Brazil, the UK (Wales and England), Denmark, The Netherlands, Belgium, Spain, Switzerland, and Germany, of course. Here is the list of events:

FRIDAY NIGHT: Get-together in the hotel bar from 5 pm. There everybody got their “welcome package”, which included a comprehensive city map both in English and German, and other items, such as the “Memorial Edition”. 8pm: Dinner at a Bavarian restaurant (“Leopold’s”), just round the corner of the hotel. (Good, inexpensive food and great German beer!)



*Ingo Stein
and
Michael
Leach*

SATURDAY: Start of the day with a rich breakfast buffet. We left the hotel on foot at 9.15. We then walked along Friedrichstrasse to “Unter den Linden”, through the Brandenburg Gate to the “Reichstag”, where we were greeted by an original Berlin organ grinder that our organiser Otto (also shown in the picture together with Karin Waack) had engaged a couple of minutes before the picture was taken. Then we enjoyed a one hour presentation (in English) of the parliament hall from 10 o'clock. Afterwards we enjoyed great views from the roof of the building and its dome. From there we walked to

the futuristic “Potsdamer Platz” (Sony Center), where we had lunch at an outdoor restaurant. Afterwards participants had 2 options:

1) About half of the participants took a walk with Manfred to “Kulturkaufhaus Dussmann” in Friedrichstrasse and browsed through CD's and DVD's. The walk was continued along Friedrichstrasse to the Lafayette department store, and to Gendarmenmarkt, where we paid a visit to a famous chocolate shop. 2) The other half took a walk with Otto, who guided people along the remains of the Berlin Wall and other historic places of interest to “Checkpoint Charlie”. Some people visited the exhibition there and learned about the manifold ways how people from East Berlin tried to escape the regime. Everybody was invited to meet in the afternoon for a cuppa and cakes at Reinhard's Landhaus in the Nikolaiviertel at around 4pm. There we sat outside under chestnut trees until a rain shower came. Otherwise, the weather was fine.



At 7.30 pm we had dinner at the “Brasserie” (at the Gendarmenmarkt opposite the historic music house, which is located between two identically looking churches). Dinner consisted of the following: Starters: Rocket salad with cherry tomatoes and roasted sun flower seeds, freshly ground Parmesan cheese and Balsamico dressing.



↑ This was our private room for Saturday night.

Main course: White German asparagus, either with a grilled fillet of salmon or Schnitzel, Vienna style, new potatoes with Sauce Béarnaise.

Dessert: White mousse au chocolat with strawberry-rhubarb dressing.



From left to right: Jane and Steve Clark, Marianne and Manfred Thönicke, Clemens Krauss, Irmi Lühr, Irmgard Bethscheider at the Brasserie

We were greeted by a clarinet player who played some of Ray's repertoire, such as "Somewhere My Love". Between the main course and dessert we went upstairs and watched a video of about 45 min and celebrated the man and his music that brought us together. The video consisted of the following:

- 1) Marty Robbins performing 5 Ray Conniff arrangements live at "Town Hall Party" (1959),
- 2) announcement of Ray's death as shown on ABC News (USA),
- 3) The Singers performing "Ave Maria" at the ceremony of Ray's funeral,
- 4) Tamara's eulogy and
- 5) Ray's last TV performance in Brazil on the Raoul Gil Show.



*Conductor
Manfred
(singing along:
Sheila Leach and
Barbara Eckhardt)*

After dessert the winner of the traditional Ray Conniff Quiz was announced and awarded (it was Bernd Eckhardt as last time in Barcelona), and then everybody was invited to sing along

with the Ray Conniff Orchestra to the playback of "Harmony" and "Say, Has Anybody Seen My Sweet Gypsy Rose?" We had lots of fun. Some people even danced along to the Ray Conniff Sound.



Irmgard and Otto, dancing wildly, filmed by Clemens Krauss and observed by Manfred

SUNDAY: Only the breakfast buffet was on the "official agenda". Many people had to leave, but others, who could stay for a little while, went on a boat trip on the river Spree, and later had lunch at "Hacke'sche Höfe".



At the "Hacke'sche Höfe" (from left to right): Michael and Sheila Leach, Ingo Stein, Jane and Steve Clark
Unfortunately, no group picture was taken. The photographs shown here were all taken by Ingo Stein and Irmgard Bethscheider.



*In front of the Brandenburg Gate:
Irmgard
Bethscheider, Clemens
Krauss, and Irmi
Lühr*

**THE NEXT CONVENTION IS SCHEDULED
TO TAKE PLACE IN CARDIFF (WALES)
IN 2005! I HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE!**

Here is the list of registered participants in alphabetical order (filed by their family names): Christian and Heidi Adler with their children (Germany), Henk Benoist (Holland), 4 Irmgard Bethscheider (Germany), Otto Bönke (our organizer No.1, Germany), Don Buchwald (USA), Stephen and Jane Clark (England), Richard and Crystabel Hutchinson (England), Dr. Alan and Carys Davies (England), Frank and Simonne Deckers (Belgium), Claudine Deman (Belgium), Bernd and Barbara Eckhardt (Germany), Sumaya Elias (Brazil), Ken Gampel (South Africa), John and Jackie Gay (Wales), Bob and Ros Gregory (England), Günter Hirschfeld, who unfortunately had to cancel (Germany), Peter and Bronwyn Horleston (Wales), Freddy and Bodil Jensen (Denmark), Ole and Vivi Jensen (Denmark), Manfred Katzer, who also had to cancel (Germany), Irmi Lühr (Germany), Clemens Krauss (Germany), Alan and Wendy Kreppel (England), Michael and Sheila Leach (England), Len Morris (England), Theo Nooij (Holland), Warren and Margaret Pischke could not make it, either (USA), William Saxer (Switzerland / Brazil), Peter and Brigitte Schwarz (Germany), Ingo Stein (Germany), Manfred and Marianne Thönicke (Germany), Ramon and Marina Vilaret (Spain), Karin Waack (Germany), Brian Warburton (England), and Markus Wieners (organiser No. 2, (Germany)).

Die Ray Conniff Fan Club Convention in Berlin war ein voller Erfolg. Wir waren über 50 Personen aus vielen Ländern. Schade, dass in letzter Minute drei Fans absagen mussten. Hier ist ein kurzer Bericht:

Am Freitag, 16. Mai, ab 17 Uhr begrüßte ich alle Teilnehmer in der Hotelbar. Dort gab es eine „Willkommens-Tagesgabe“, zu der ein Stadtplan in deutscher und englischer Sprache gehörte – und der neuste Newsletter und die Spezialausgabe zur Erinnerung an Ray. Hier das Programm:

FREITAGABEND:

Zusammenkunft ab 17 Uhr in der Hotelbar. Hier bekam jeder ein Namensschild, einen Stadtplan, die Sonderausgabe von 's Conniff und den Newsletter.

Um 20 Uhr gingen wir ins „Leopold's“, ein bayerisches Lokal, gleich um die Ecke vom Hotel. Dort gab's gutes Essen und ebensolches Bier.

SONNABEND:

Nach dem reichhaltigen Frühstücksbuffet war Abmarsch bereits um 9.15 Uhr. Wir flanieren die Friedrichsstraße entlang, dann weiter „Unter den Linden“, durchs Brandenburger Tor hindurch zum Reichstag, wo wir von einem Leierkastenmann begrüßt wurden. Wir zogen dann in den Plenarsaal. Es gab einen interessanten Vortrag in englischer Sprache. Anschließend ging's aufs Dach des Reichstages und in die Kuppel. Von dort hatte man herrliche Ausblicke auf Berlin. Danach ging's zu Fuß zum Potsdamer Platz. Das Sony Center war sehenswert. Wir saßen "drinnen draußen" in einem Lokal namens "Josty".. Für das Nachmittagsprogramm gab es mehrere Optionen:

1) Mit Manfred zurück zur Friedrichsstraße ins Kulturkaufhaus Dussmann. Dort konnte man genüsslich in CDs und DVDs stöbern. Weiter ging's durchs Kaufhaus Lafayette und zum Gendarmenmarkt, zu einem herrlichen Schokoladenladen. 2) Otto führte eine Gruppe vom Potsdamer Platz entlang am Gebäude des Bundesrats und den Überbleibseln der Berliner Mauer zum Checkpoint Charlie. Wer wollte, konnte sich dort die Ausstellung ansehen. Dort wird dokumentiert, wie einfallsreich die Leute waren, um dem DDR-Regime zu entkommen.

Jeder war ab ca. 16 Uhr willkommen in Reinhard's Landhaus im Nikolaiviertel. Dort saßen wir bei Kaf-

fee und Kuchen, bis ein Regenschauer die Idylle störte. Ansonsten war das Wetter prima.

Das Abendessen in der Brasserie am Gendarmenmarkt begann um 19:30 Uhr. Es gab folgendes Menü, sofern man nicht à la Carte wählte:

Vorspeise: Ruccolasalat mit Kirschtomaten, gerösteten Sonnenblumenkernen, frisch geriebenem Parmesan und Balsamico-Vinaigrette.

Hauptgericht: Spargel – entweder mit gegrilltem Lachs oder einem Wiener Schnitzel, mit neuen Kartoffeln und einer Sauce Béarnaise. Dessert: Weiße Schokoladenmousse an Erdbeer-Rhabarbergrütze.

Das Restaurant liegt genau gegenüber dem Musikhaus (zwischen den beiden identischen Kirchen). Wir wurden dort von einem Klarinettenspieler begrüßt, der einige Titel aus dem Ray Conniff-Repertoire spielte. Zwischen Hauptgericht und Nachtsch gab es im 1. Stock ein 45 min dauerndes Video, womit wir einen gewissen Mann und seine Musik ehrten. Es wurde gezeigt:

1) Marty Robbins live (5 Songs aus einem Konzert von 1959; alle waren Ray Conniff Arrangements), 2) die Meldung von Rays Tod aus den ABC-Nachrichten USA), 3) von Rays Trauerfeier: Die Singers sangen "Ave Maria" und 4) Tamaras Grabrede, 5) Rays wahrscheinlich letzter Auftritt im brasilianischen Fernsehen in der Raoul Gil Show.

Nach dem Nachtsch wurde der diesjährige Gewinner des Ray Conniff Quiz bekannt gegeben (er hieß wie auch beim letzten Mal Bernd Eckhardt), und es gab viel Spaß beim Karaoke ("Harmony" und "Gypsy Rose"). Einige tanzten sogar zum Ray Conniff Sound.

SONNTAG:

Es gab nur das gemeinsame Frühstück auf der Tagesordnung. Die meisten derjenigen, die sich nicht sofort auf den Nachhauseweg machen mussten, machten eine Bootsfahrt auf der Spree. Anschließend aßen wir zusammen zu Mittag in den Hackeschen Höfen.

Otto und Markus, Ihr habt Hervorragendes geleistet! Nochmals 1000 Dank im Namen aller Ray Conniff Fans!

Die 2005 Convention wird übrigens in Cardiff (Wales) stattfinden!

THE RAY CONNIFF QUIZ

The Ray Conniff International Fan Club Convention in Berlin, May 16-18, 2003

How well do you know Ray Conniff's repertoire? Below there are lists of song titles, filed according to certain categories. Would you know off-hand, what animal is mentioned most of all in the songs which Ray chose? How about months, food and drink, flowers and plants, and parts of the body? Well, you'll know after you filled in the missing words.

FOOD AND DRINK

1. Little Green _____
2. _____ Hill
3. A Spoonful of _____
4. Days of _____ and Roses
5. _____ (title of an album)
6. The _____ Man
7. _____ (sort of Cognac produced outside France)
8. I'll Be With You in _____ Blossom Time
9. Who's in the _____ Patch with Sally?
10. The _____ Vendor
11. You're the _____ in my _____
12. Put Your Arms Around Me, _____
13. _____ Come Back
14. _____ comb
15. A Taste of _____
16. Stompin' At The _____
17. Kisses Sweeter Than _____



ANIMALS



18. Alley _____
19. I'm An Old _____ Hand
20. A _____ With No Name
21. Bless the _____ and the Children
22. _____'s in the Cradle
23. _____ Viejo
24. The _____ Hop
25. Theme from _____ Lake Ballet
26. Rudolph, the Red-Nosed _____
27. Swing, Little _____
28. Tie Me _____ Down, Sport
29. _____ Rag
30. Lullaby of _____ land



MONTHS



31. _____ Love
32. _____ Night
33. _____ Song
34. _____ in _____
35. _____ in Portugal
36. _____ in Paris



FLOWERS AND PLANTS



37. Moonlight and _____
38. Days of Wine and _____
39. Yellow _____
40. O _____
41. _____ (can be found e.g. in Austria)
42. Red _____ for a Blue Lady
43. The Green _____ of Summer
44. Tie a Yellow Ribbon Round the Ole _____
45. _____ Garden
46. Lullaby of the _____



PARTS OF THE BODY



47. Green _____
48. Spanish _____
49. Yours is My _____ Alone
50. Put Your _____ Around Me, Honey
51. Go in' Out of My _____
52. _____ Around
53. I'm an Old Cow _____
54. Smoke Gets in Your _____
55. I've Grown Accustomed to Her _____
56. _____ Across the Table
57. None But the Lonely _____
58. Young at _____
59. I've Got You Under My _____
60. I Only Have _____ For You



MUSICAL TERMS



61. Moonlight _____
62. I Hear a _____
63. _____ For Two Guitars
64. _____ in Blue
65. I Whistle a Happy _____
66. Warsaw _____
67. Our _____
68. I Write the _____
69. Mystery Movie _____
70. Ravel's _____

Here are some of the funniest wrong solutions: "Who's in the Cabbage (Strawberry) Patch With Sally?", "I've Grown Accustomed to Her Lips (Face)", "May in September" and "April in December" should have been "June in January", Swing Little Monkey (Glow Worm)". Sorry, but "Green Sleeves" are not parts of the body, and "Cherry" is not a sort of Cognac but a fruit! Anyway, here are the right solutions:

- 1) Apples, 2) Blueberry, 3) Sugar, 4) Wine, 5) Honey, 6) Candy, 7) Brandy, 8) Apple, 9) Strawberry, 10) Peanut, 11) Cream, Coffee, 12) Honey, 13) Honey, 14) Honey, 15) Honey, 16) Savoy, 17) Wine, 18) Cat, 19) Cow, 20) Horse, 21) Beasts, 22) Cat, 23) Caballo, 24) Flea, 25) Swan, 26) Reindeer, 27) Glow Worm, 28) Kangaroo, 29) Tiger, 30) Bird, 31) April, 32) June, 33) September, 34) June, January, 35) April, 36) April, 37) Roses, 38) Roses, 39) Rose (of Texas), 40) Tannenbaum, 41) Edelweiss, 42) Roses, 43) Leaves, 44) Oak Tree, 45) Rose, 46) Leaves, 47) Eyes, 48) Eyes, 49) Heart, 50) Arms, 51) Head, 52) Hand, 53) Hand, 54) Eyes, 55) Face, 56) Hands, 57) Heart, 58) Heart, 59) Skin, 60) Eyes, 61) Sonata or Serenade, 62) Rhapsody, 63) Melody, 64) Rhapsody, 65) Tune, 66) Concerto, 67) Waltz, 68) Songs, 69) Theme, 70) Bolero

And here are the lyrics for our sing-along with Ray, for which we used two channels of quadraphonic tapes, which featured the orchestra / Dixieland band only:

RAY CONNIFF KARAOKE / LETTERS

HARMONY

The time has come let us begin
With all our voices joining in
To sing of love and brotherhood
People doing what they should to...
...help their fellow men be free
And fill this land with harmony
The young and old, the rich, the poor
Making sounds never heard before:
Harmony, harmony,
Let's all join in harmony
Sing away the hurt and fear
A great new day will soon be here.
Like the shepherd guards his sheep
Watch your children as they sleep
Like the potter turns his clay
Help to shape a better day and...
...let us sing a song of love
There's one thing I'm certain of
Love will fill the hearts of men
Peace will come on earth once again
Harmony, harmony,
Let's all join in harmony
Sing away the hurt and fear
A great new day will soon be here
Harmony, harmony,
Let's all join in harmony
Sing of love and brotherhood
People doing what they should
Harmony, harmony,
Let's all join in harmony
Sing of love and tell me love's the answer...

SAY HAS ANYBODY SEEN MY SWEET GYPSY ROSE?

Say has anybody seen my sweet Gypsy Rose?
Here's her picture when she was my sweet Mary Jo
Now she's got rings on her fingers and bells on her toes
Say has anybody seen my sweet Gypsy Rose?
I got wind my Jo's been dancing here in New Orleans
In this smoke-filled honky-tonk they call the land of dreams
Now, here she comes a-strutting in her birthday clothes
Say has anybody seen my sweet Gypsy Rose?
Oh baby, baby, won't you come home?
We all miss you
And every night we kiss your picture
Oh Rose, one night, the lights go dim and the crowd goes home
That's the day you wake up and you find you're alone
So let's say good-bye to Gypsy, hello Mary Jo
Say has anybody seen my sweet Gypsy Rose?
(Dixieland band solo)
Say has anybody seen my sweet gypsy Rose?
Oh baby, baby, won't you come home?
We all miss you
And every night we kiss your picture
Oh Rose, one night, the lights go dim and the crowd goes home
That's the day you wake up and you find you're alone
So take those rings off your fingers and bells off your toes
Say has anybody seen my...
Now you know just what I mean by
...anybody seen my sweet Gypsy Rose?
Come on Rose!



Happiness Is Ray Conniff Music!

Manfred and Otto

Dear Marianne and Manfred,
Just a short note to thank you both for a very enjoyable and successful weekend in Berlin at the Ray Conniff Convention. It was good to see the friends again we made in Barcelona and meet new ones this time. Well Manfred, after Berlin the „Welsh“ have certainly got a job on their hands to emulate Otto's achievements but rest assured we'll give it our best shot and not leave any stones unturned in our efforts.
Glad everyone liked the "in Memoriam" booklet although it was a very sad time for me when producing it. Still as you said his memory and music will live on forever. Thanks once again for your hospitality in Berlin and for

your continued work and support to the Ray Conniff fans. Best wishes, **Jackie & John Gay**

Dear Marianne and Manfred,
Thank you for a wonderful weekend in Berlin. There was so much to see. The parliament building was spectacular and to hear about the history of the Berlin Wall and see the difference it has made to a lot of people. It was good seeing old friends and making new friends one big happy family. We went to see Checkpoint Charlie after the boat trip and said goodbye. It was very moving to see Ray's funeral and hear Tamara. She was very close to Ray. Also to hear the musician play Ray's music. We would also like to thank Otto and Markus so much for all their hard work to make it such an enjoyable weekend. Take care, we hope to see you in Cardiff in 2005.
Love and best wishes,
Ros and Bob Gregory (Bristol, UK)

Dear Manfred,
I thought I would put pen to paper to thank all concerned for the Conniff Convention in Berlin. It was the best weekend I've ever had. It was really great to meet so many fans of Ray's music. I can't imagine any of us forgetting the pleasure that Ray gave us all over the years of his musical career. His distinctive sound will always be remembered.
I hope we will continue to hold these conventions in years to come, so we can continue to meet all the Conniff fans and enjoy each other's company, as it was in Berlin, and to keep Ray's music alive. Thanks for a great time.
Regards, **Len Morris** (Birmingham, UK)

I have pondered for a while whether to publish such letters as the ones below or not, but then decided to let you participate in the joy I had for the praise I received. Thanks for your appreciation, people! (Manfred)

Hello Manfred,
Just a short note to congratulate you and everyone who helped putting the 's *Always Conniff* tribute magazine together. It really is a superb tribute to Ray's life and career. The vast amount of obituaries and tributes published is surely a measure of the high esteem in which Ray and his recordings are held.

We understand that the Berlin event went very well with a good attendance. We are delighted that it was a success and sorry that we could not be with you this time. Hopefully, next time...

Best regards,
Les & Barbara Peckham, UK

Hi, Manfred!
Just received my copy of the memorial edition of 'S (ALWAYS) CONNIFF. When I read that you were working on such magazine, I knew it would be exceptional, like everything you did all these years, however, I must confess that you really surpassed any possible expectation I had. What you (and everybody else involved) did was really a labor of love for Ray and his unforgettable music.

I am really proud to be a tiny part of that, with my small contributions over the years, and I am sure that Ray, wherever he is now is happy and honored to have such a tribute paid to his life and work.

Thank you for all the happiness and joy you brought to my life over these wonderful years as a faithful Ray Conniff fan. Without your help I couldn't have everything that I have and that means so much to me.

Respectfully,
Jorge Carpes (Copacabana, Brazil)

Manfred,
I just received my Ray Conniff memorial book. Thanks to all of you for your hard work in putting it all together. It is beautiful and a wonderful testament to the great music Ray gave to his fans and the world. Also thanks for including my statements in the book. Ray will always be my favorite musical performer. He had a unique sound and style that nobody will ever duplicate. I hope someday someone will put all of the history of Ray's career together and publish a book.
Best regards, Marty Wagers, USA

Dear Manfred,
I received today in my house 's *Always Conniff*, with happiness and emotion I had when opening and reading the pages of this tribute. You and

everybody that accomplished this preciousness have to be congratulated. It is a just and true homage to our dear Maestro who certainly always will be in our hearts and in our memory. It is a true album to keep forever. Once again my thanks for all that you have been doing to fans of Ray Conniff and personally for me.

Best regards, Roberto from Brazil

Manfred,
Bravo! The tribute booklet was fitting in its grand scope and quality for the man and the musician, Ray Conniff. Thanks to you and your team for your obviously exhaustive efforts to produce such a book. I am honored to be included, as I was to have been asked to speak in the first place by Vera and Tamara.

Regards, and thanks again for the tribute book.
Dave Theriault, LA

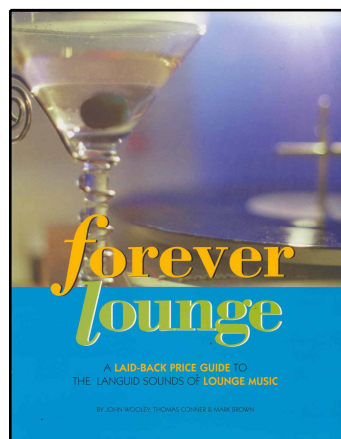
Doug wrote on August 16: Last week a copy of the Say You Say Me CD sold for \$86 on eBay. Glad to see that there are still fans willing to spend that much on Ray's music!

Manfred.....Sincere Congratulations, on an exceptional job you've done with putting together the outstanding "'s Always Conniff" Special Tribute Edition. It's excellent and befitting such an outstanding recording artist such as Ray.

I can't imagine how much of your time it's taken, together with more than a large dose of 'love' too I can see.

It's a real credit to you Manfred.....just wonderful! Once again, Congratulations mate!!!! An outstanding result. Just wonderful!

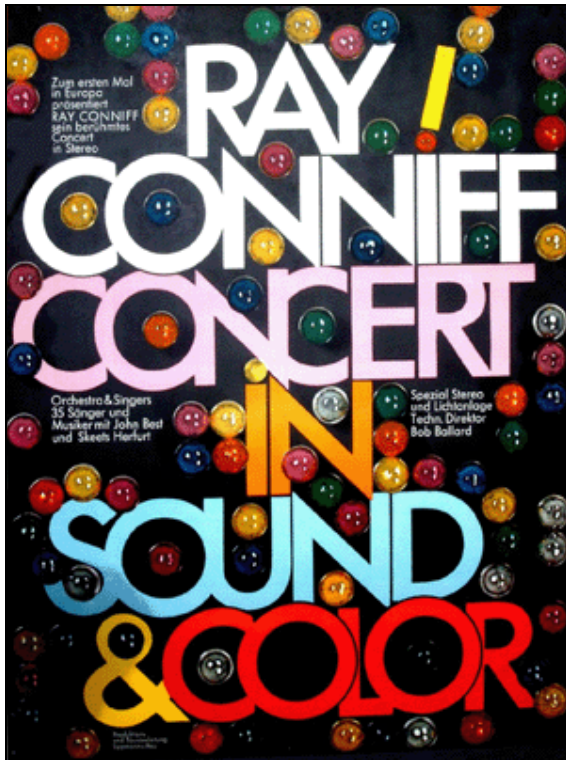
Very best regards,
Chris Couldrey, Sydney, Australia



Chris also drew my attention to a book titled "Forever Lounge" (publishers: ATB [USA], ISBN: 1-58221-004-7, \$ 24.95; see cover on the left). On page 61 you can find the following entry next to a discography: Ray Conniff's "We've Only Just Begun"

looks and sounds like a typical Conniff offering, with tasteful, romantic versions of other people's hits and a highly attractive female face on the cover. The only two things that make it stand out are (1) the hot brunette pictured on the cover is his wife, Vera, and (2) Conniff himself poses on the back with a Ford Bronco racing car he drove in the 1970 Baja 500!

From the collection of Clemens Krauss: Four poster scans, and one from ebay:



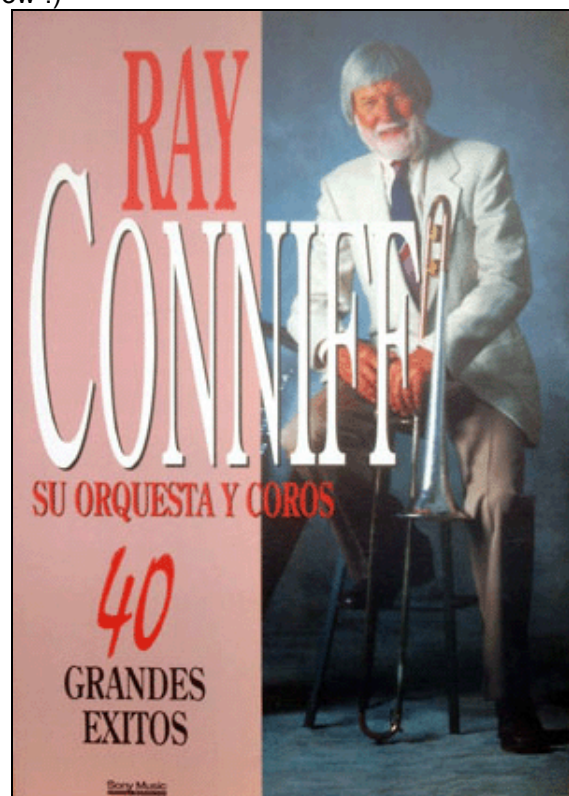
↑ This poster was used for Ray Conniff's first Europe Tour through Germany, Austria and Switzerland in 1969.



↑ This poster advertised Ray Conniff's 1977 Brazil Tour. (His latest album then was "After the Lovin'", which - like in the UK - was titled "If You Leave Me Now".)



↑ Ray's first UK Tour started off in Birmingham on September 22, followed by Leicester, Newcastle, Stoke-on-Trent, Southport, Manchester, Sheffield, Oxford, Bristol, Cardiff, Eastbourne, Portsmouth, Clacton, Chatham, Brighton, Bournemouth and Croydon. The poster advertised his concert at the Royal Albert Hall in London on September 27, 1973.



↑ This is not a tour poster but a billboard for record stores in Spain, advertising a 2 record set, titled "40 Grandes Exitos". If I am not mistaken, this was the last Ray Conniff compilation that was released on 12" LP records.



← A poster found on ebay. It advertises one of Ray's Concerts in Stereo way back in November 1960. The text says, "The most exciting sight and sound attraction today".



↑ This flyer assumedly is from 1969. It was also found on ebay.

Rare Record Covers



↑ Laughter in the Rain, an LP from Russia



↑ The Poppins Album cover from Japan



↑ This Is My Song / Born Free single from Germany



↑ John Barry: James Bond Theme b/w Ray Conniff: Love Is Blue, a CBS Special Products single from the UK made for Schweppes / Cadbury

More rare record cover next time...

Here is a partial (?) list of movies and TV series that feature the music of Ray Conniff:



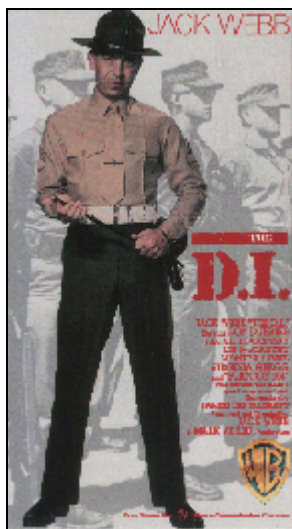
HOW TO SAVE A MARRIAGE AND RUIN YOUR LIFE

Music by Michel Legrand

Ray Conniff and the Singers: "Winds of Change" (vocal and instrumental versions over the credits), soundtrack album and video currently not available (Top left: US poster, right: US VHS cover)

THE D.I.

The theme of Ray Conniff's composition "The Drop" (from the "Dance the Bop!" album) was used for this movie. Monica Lewis sings "(If'n You Don't) Somebody Else Will", backed by Ray Conniff and his group. Home video (cover of the VHS cassette from the USA shown here) not available at the moment.



ARCHIE BUNKER'S PLACE

Ray Conniff recorded the title tune ("Remembering You"), "Those Were The days", and various jingles for this popular TV series. His rendition of "Remembering You" is not the one featured on the "After the Lovin'" album. Hopefully, the complete series will become available on DVD some time in the future, as its predecessor "All in the Family".



PAPER TIGER

Music by Roy Budd

Ray Conniff and the Singers recorded "My Little Friend" (vocal and wordless versions) in London. The home video is currently not available, but the soundtrack album (shown here) is.



THE DEATHMASTER

Ray Conniff's name appears in the credits. In fact, he wrote the music to a song which is sung by an actor accompanied by a guitar.

Ray Conniff recorded this song with his Singers. It was titled "A Man Without A Vision" and was released on a single only.

Side B was "Face on the Wind" (Columbia 4-45782). Neither one have ever been included in any of Ray's original albums or compilations.

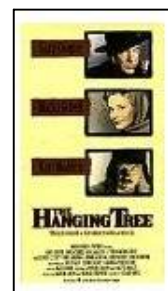
This movie is currently available on DVD (released in 2002) in the USA.



THE HANGING TREE

Ray Conniff's arrangement and backing of Marty Robbin's rendition of the title tune can be heard during the credits.

Left: Poster from Italy, right: VHS cover from the States.



I guess this is a complete list of Ray Conniff compositions and recordings for the big and small screens. Of course, his music is also featured in many others, such as in **THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT MARY**.

For this comedy, a few tracks from Ray Conniff's "Say It With Music" album were used. However, they did not turn up on the soundtrack album. A list of these would be endless. However, if you know of any other movies or TV series which should have been included here, please let me know. Thanks.

This article was kindly sent by Jorge Carpes, who wrote in an accompanying letter: *Hi, Manfred, I found this very beautiful article by a (renowned) Brazilian writer, Mario Prata in a very important newspaper from São Paulo, O Estadão. I don't know if you were aware of it, but I decided to send it to you anyway - It would be nice to have it featured in 's Conniff. This time, don't worry about its content: There is no offence here at all, only someone saying that after Ray passed away he was aware that after Elvis Presley, The Beatles, Janis Joplin and so many other revolutionary artists, he realized that what his generation really liked was Ray Conniff. Yours, Jorge*

Quarta-feira, 30 de outubro de 2002

Ray Conniff

Se você não sabe quem foi (é) Ray Conniff, me dá vontade de dizer que então você não viveu. Mas não vou dizer. Juro.

É que ele morreu há um mês e eu me pus a pensar na minha vida musical dos anos 50 pra cá.

Comecei com ele, nos Bailes de Debutante do interior. Love Is a Many-Splendored Things é marco não apenas musical, mas de letra. Dançar de rosto colado ouvindo Hi-lilli, Hi-lo jamais poderá ser descrito em dígitos.

Mas a minha geração encarou todas. Logo veio o Elvis Presley e todo mundo virou roqueiro. O Ray Conniff era um velho. Imagine que, logo depois, chegam os Beatles. Depois a música de protesto, a bossa nova, o tropicalismo. A gente encarou todos os movimentos com uma seriedade que não existe mais hoje.

Mas no fundo, no fundo, agora chego à conclusão de que o som da minha geração foi mesmo Ray Conniff. A paz do seu som.

O mais ou menos contemporâneo Pedro Vergueiro, me manda um e-mail que eu assino embaixo (e em cima) "Surpresa e susto: o maestro e arranjador Ray Conniff se foi. Uma banda e seu coral ficaram órfãos. A emoção da perda nos atinge também.

Tristeza: pela falta que fará e porque as músicas novas não mais serão por ele adaptadas para aquele seu ritmo tão peculiar e que muito embalou nossas vidas, quando jovens, menos jovens e que, ainda, embala as nossas recordações agora que somos pouco jovens.

Ray Conniff sempre foi parte integrante das nossas alegrias e, o que enobrece a sua importância, compartilhou sua música com nossos amores.

Todos da minha geração dançaram ao som da sua música envolvente, de seu balanço sedutor: o rosto colado, o chega pra lá sem perder o contato das mãos para poder trazer nosso par de volta, para o nosso abraço, todos os passos sob o olhar fiscalizador da mãe dela (a futura sogra?). Ele foi o símbolo do romance, do charme, nas festinhas, nos bailes de formatura e, também, nas boates.

Sua alva figura fará falta sim, e muito."

Acho que é isso. Somos todos uns conservadores. A gente tem uns cabelos, uns tênis, mas a gente já passou dos 50, Pedro. Por mais que tenhamos nos apaixonado pelos Beatles, pelos Stones, pelo Chico e Caetano, pela Janis Joplin, na hora do vamos ver, a gente ataca é mesmo de Ray Conniff.

Fico por aqui pensando se o Lula conheceu (ou conhece) o Ray Conniff. Vou torcer para que conheça. Para que ele faça um governo em ritmo de The First Time ever I Saw You Face.

Passei toda a campanha esperando que algum deles, seja para presidente, governador, deputado e o escambau, falasse no principal problema brasileiro.

Não é segurança, educação, diploma, fome. É um problema de auto-estima. No último debate, o Lula tocou no assunto falando com uma professora desempregada. O que o Brasil tá precisando é disto: auto-estima. O resto são problemas políticos e vocês tratem de dar um jeito. Não precisa, de cara, arrumar emprego para 12 milhões de desempregados. É mais cabível injetar otimismo e dose de auto-estima nuns 140 milhões. O brasileiro, apesar do penta de futebol, anda de cabeça baixa. Com vergonha de ser brasileiro, temendo o que a imprensa lá de fora vai dizer.

O brasileiro tem de ouvir Ray Conniff e se acalmar, gostar mais de si mesmo.

Ou, se preferir algo mais forte, pode ir com o Elvis cantando It's Now or Never. Uma bela canção para se cantar nesta semana.

Note: I have collected more articles from various countries, such as Argentina, which I will save for future editions of 's Conniff. Thanks to everyone who sent in newspaper clippings or drew my attention to articles about Ray published on the Internet. - Manfred

An article from O Estado de São Paulo

From an e-mail from Michael D. Bright, I received in October 2003:

Hi Manfred,

I visit the Ray Conniff web-site often; a very informative, well researched site. What a pity most other sites dedicated to EZ artists don't share more info/news, etc., although I think Percy Faith & Bert Kaempfert both have excellent sites.



*Today, Oct. 20th, would have been the 90th birthday of the frequent '70s-early '80s trumpet soloist, **Johnny Best**. Best, who died here in So. California on Sept. 20, at 89, was modest about his ability as a trumpeter; his obituary, however, simply*

*states 'he was the best'. One of the last survivors of the Bob Crosby alumni that included Johnny Guarnieri, Eddie Miller and Dick Cathcart, all of whom also went on to play in Ray's orchestra, Johnny Best was remembered mostly for his work with Crosby and Glenn Miller in the 40's. I found just one obituary for him on the web, at the 'JAZZ CONNECTION MAGAZINE', or simply type in 'Johnny Best'-'1913-2003' and it should come up. Probably you'll want to share this info with the fan club. His death comes less than a month after that of trumpeter **James 'Jimmy' Salko**, who died on August 25, at 83. I read his tiny obituary in the L.A. 'Times' - I live in So. California - and I've never seen any mention of this anywhere else. But then Salko was more of an ensemble musician in his overall career; Best was known more as a soloist and thus became a better known 'name' musician.*

But we still have the music. I hope that 'Essential' compilation CD comes to fruition in 2004. I usually don't care for compilations, but the selections here were well chosen, not to mention the inclusion of those rare 'SINGLES'. In 90% of the cases, the tracks chosen are the very selections I would have picked had I had that opportunity. I look forward to that CD. Thanks for your time. Yours, MICHAEL

Thanks a lot, for drawing our attention to the obituary, Michael. Here is the article, titled

"He Was The Best"

as found on this website:

<http://www.jazzconnectionmag.com/Remembering%20Johnny%20Best.htm>

reproduced with kind permission of the author.

Johnny Best, Trumpeter With Many Big Bands Dies At Age 89

by Stephen Fratallone /
Jazz Connection Magazine

Johnny Best, the trumpeter whose lush, robust tone graced the bands of Artie Shaw, Glenn Miller, Bob Crosby, Benny Goodman during the 1930s and '40s, died on Saturday, Sept. 20, 2003, at his home in La Jolla, CA. He was 91.

I was privileged to have seen Best perform a number of times, mostly as a member of Bob Crosby's big band and smaller Dixieland jazz group, the Bob Cats. The first time I saw him was in Crosby's big band at Disneyland on July 1, 1985. Paralyzed from an accident a few years earlier, Best was in his wheel chair as an unpretentious member of the trumpet section, seemingly unbothered by his mobile limitations.

Later that year I saw Best casually as an attendee to trumpeter "Wild Bill" Davison's 80th birthday bash at the Marriott Hotel near Los Angeles International Airport.



Trumpeter Johnny Best, shown above in a 1986 photo from the Jazz at Ojai Festival in Ojai, CA, played with the great swing bands of Artie Shaw, Glenn Miller, Bob Crosby and Benny Goodman. His open, robust tone was featured on many ballads.

The next time I got to hear Best play was at the Jazz At Ojai Festival in Ojai, CA, on Sept. 27, 1986, this time as a member of Crosby's group, the Bob Cats. He was joined on stage with other Bob Cat/big band stalwarts that included saxophonist Eddie Miller, bassist Bob Haggart (two of Crosby's original Bob Cats from 1936), clarinetist Abe Most, trumpeter Dick Cathcart, drummer Nick Fatool, trombonist Bob Havens, and pianist Ray Sherman. While Crosby introduced the songs and sang a few numbers, it was the Bob Cats themselves with their excellent musicianship that made the concert such a memorable and swinging affair. *(Note by Manfred: The picture of John Best in a wheelchair shown on the previous page and other pictures taken at the Ojai Festival as well as others with Artie Shaw and other big bands can be found on the Jazz Connection Internet page.)*

In the spring of 2000, I contacted Best for an interview and he graciously agreed to talk with me. Printed in the latest edition of JAZZ CONNECTION is the article that was written based on that interview which appeared in the September 2000 issue. It is reprinted and also featured on the website in memory of a great musician who helped to define the music of the big band era with the great bands for which he played and for his often times colorful personality. As radio host Fred Hall of the syndicated big band show, Swing Thing, once described Best... he was simply "... the best!"

Stephen Fratallone,
Jazz Connection Magazine, October 2003.

* The interview is featured on the website mentioned above. It is titled

Trumpeter Johnny Best Helped To Record Many Standards From Big Band Era

It gives a comprehensive report of John Best's career. Here is a paragraph that refers to his long-time collaboration with Ray Conniff:

Trumpeter Johnny Best has helped to make his musical contribution to the history of American popular music by playing in established bands that made such music widely accepted in its generation. Best has helped to recorded such standards from the Big Band era with the orchestras of Artie Shaw, Glenn Miller, Bob Crosby and Benny Goodman. Best considers some of his better playing were on recordings done with **Ray Conniff** that were sold outside the United States, he said.

John Best played many great trumpet solos on Ray's albums, such as *Harmony*, and *I Write the Songs*. Good examples can also be found on the following live albums: *Europa Tournee '69 / Live at the Sahara/Tahoe and Ray Conniff in Japan 1974*.

Hi Manfred,
Here's an article I didn't notice on your obituaries page. Go to
<http://spcala.com/pages/newsreold.htm#rayconniff>. Take care, Doug
Thanks for drawing my attention to this website, Doug. Here is what you can find there:

spcaLA MOURNS THE PASSING OF RAY CONNIFF

LOS ANGELES – Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Los Angeles (spcaLA) mourns the death of three year volunteer Ray Conniff, the Grammy-winning arranger, bandleader, and trombonist. Conniff, 85, was a foster volunteer along with his wife, Vera, saving over 50 kittens and puppies. Ray and Vera Conniff won spcaLA's Foster Parents of the Year award in 2000 for their life-saving work.

"Ray always said Vera was the volunteer but he would come to the shelter to pick up or drop off kittens and puppies. He turned their extra bathroom into a nursery for the underage animals and had a puppy playpen in their kitchen," says Director of Volunteer Services Debra Sutton.

"Caring volunteers are the backbone of spcaLA. Without them, many animals would not have a fighting chance at life and a loving home. We will miss Ray and we send our thoughts to his family," said spcaLA President Madeline Bernstein.

Dear Manfred,

Thank you for the Newsletter. I have enjoyed reading it. It's always good to get updates about Ray Conniff. Last October, when Warren M. Pischke wrote and told me that Ray Conniff had passed away I was very, very heart-broken, I couldn't believe that he passed away. May I share a few words to you, all the fan club members and to the Conniff family. I have been a fan of Ray Conniff in my very early days since I was about three years old when my mother would play the records on the console stereo in our living room. I enjoyed many great songs on different albums. Ray's music brought many hours of enjoyment to me, I can't tell how many records I like because I like them all. As the years have passed and I am 76 years old I still enjoy many great songs and albums from Ray Conniff and his Singers. Now that Ray has passed away he will always be greatly missed but luckily there is so much of his good music left behind we can always remember him. I am so glad that I have a lot of his LP's and I am starting to collect more and more of his CD's every time I go too the record store I always get a new Ray Conniff album. I especially like all the records Ray did in the 70's such as "After the Lovin'", "Another Somebody Done Somebody Wrong Song", "Harmony", "Alone Again (Naturally)", and many more. Ray is always in my thoughts and I am praying for all the Conniff family. Sincerely, Ashley Ray France, Ammon, Idaho, USA (March 3)

Dear Manfred,

Now we do not have Ray Conniff with us any more. However, we still can enjoy his wonderful music. It is so lovely and there is nobody in the world who can make such good music as Ray did. I have been a great fan of Ray's music since 1957, and now I have all his LP's and CD's, not only one copy of each. but every one in duplicate or triplicate. Believe me, I listen to his music every day. All the best, Werner Blom,

Århus, Denmark (March 17, 2003)

After I had received the sad message from Vera, my telephone constantly rang that evening as well as during the weekend and the following days. Fans called as well as newspaper journalists and editors from radio stations. Among the latter was one from Italy. The lady asked me whether there was someone who could talk about Ray and his music in Italian. Of course, I immediately thought of Luciano in Rome. I gave the lady his telephone number, and before she could dial it, I did and told him about the tragic event and that some Italian radio station wanted him to comment on Ray. A month later, Luciano gave me this report:

Dear Manfred, Ten minutes after we had ended our telephone conversation (which left me with a strange sense of emptiness in my stomach), Radio 24 Ore called me and we had a nice chat. The lady, Roberta Giordano, CEO of that station, grew up with the sounds of the big orchestras, due to her father's taste, and Ray, of course, was among them. We agreed to talk about this great artist live on the air through the phone at 10.15 pm. My phone rang at precisely 10.17 pm, and this is exactly what I can remember:

I answered the phone and a lady asked me to hold the line for a few seconds. Roberta Giordano was on the air, talking about another subject for a couple of minutes. Then I could hear Ray's "Besame Mucho", which I had suggested as an intro to present his work. Suddenly I heard Roberta say, "A big artist has just left us, the trumpeter (!), arranger, composer Ray Conniff died on Saturday, and a lot of people are sad because he is no longer with us. What you are listening to is one of his biggest successes, 'Besame Mucho'. One of his most devoted fans is the phone right now. Are you there, Mr. San Giuliano?" Here is the rest of our conversation:

Luciano: Good evening, yes I am.

Roberta: 'Besame Mucho' was one of his biggest successes, but did he compose it?

Luciano: No, the song was composed by Consuelo Velazquez, Ray Conniff arranged it in 1960, and it was a fantastic success.

Roberta: What kind of songs did he record? Standards?

Luciano: Well, at the beginning of his career he started with them, but throughout the years he chose from all sorts of genres, choosing the best of all kinds.

Roberta: Are there many Conniff fans in the world?

Luciano: Ray sold about 75 million records over the years, earning four platinum records and eleven gold albums. We have a fan club in Germany with thousands of people from all over the world. You can see how big his popularity was. Every year he sold 1,600,000 records, and from 1956 his success never declined.

Roberta: How did he get the idea for his unique sound?

Luciano: As he told us, during the Big Band Era, as he was travelling with other musicians on buses from one city to the other, they were rehearsing the songs they were going to perform, but they did not have room

enough on the bus to play their instruments, so everybody "played" his instrument by using his voice, singing *doo-doo* and *dah-dah*. Many years later Ray remembered that and he used this idea for his records. Moreover, he worked hard with sound engineers to make improvements on the echo, the reverberation, and to equalize the final sound to make it unique and unmistakable as we know it from his records.

Roberta: Very well, now (addressing the listeners) listen to this track. Can you tell which one it is? It was composed by Ray.

I listened silently and was surprised. Did she know which songs Ray had composed? The melody that came up was "The Theme from the 'Perry Mason Show'" - not even played by Ray but by Max Steiner, the composer!!!

Roberta: What do you think, Mr. San Giuliano, is it one of your favourites?

Luciano: Yes, it is very catchy and intriguing. It was recorded by Ray Conniff in September 1957.

Roberta: How will you remember Ray Conniff, what would you say?

Luciano: Well, I would say he was an eternal boy, forever young and full of enthusiasm. He got up very early in the morning and could never sit still. He was always alert and active. He owned a motor home and travelled the United States every year, maybe looking for an 'internal' freedom of expression. He always played 'young' arrangements for the 'young at heart', filling them with new life and pulse.

Roberta: Thank you. We will end this segment of the programme with his biggest hit, 'Somewhere My Love', right?

Luciano: Yes, more than 5,000,000 copies of it were sold, the album of that title included.

Roberta: Thank you, Mr. San Giuliano, good night. (And *Lara's Theme* went on...)

Well, that was it. When the chat ended I did not feel satisfied. Maybe I was too emotional, maybe I could have said more and in a different way, maybe I should have corrected her regarding 'trumpeter' and the *Perry Mason Theme*. However, the time devoted to Ray was so short, just 12 minutes, that I decided not to do so. Correcting her might have been embarrassing.

What I regret most is that I could have asked on the air to release a compilation CD in Italy with his best arrangements. Maybe an Italian producer was listening. However, I mentioned the club and talked about the most important orchestra leader of the world. A close friend of mine who listened to the radio interview told me I gave a wonderful impression, but she is too kind to say otherwise...

Well, Luciano, I know the feeling. I have been on the air several times and I was never pleased with what I said and how I said it. I am sure you did a wonderful job. Thank you for remembering Ray and reminding people in Italy of him and his music. (Manfred)

Serge Elhaïk's News of the Past: Focus on Bob Ballard

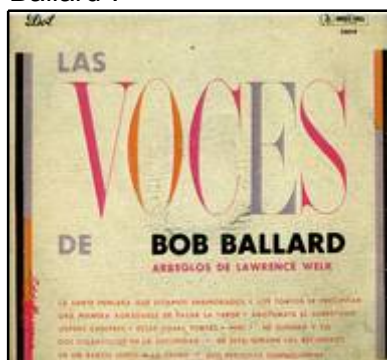
Does the name Bob Ballard ring a bell? He was a very important person in Ray's career. Many Conniff fans will immediately remember that he was the Director of Production for the early Concerts in Stereo in 1959 and throughout the 60s. He also was the sound engineer during Ray's first European Tour in 1969, and he also was responsible for the shows at the Sahara / Lake Tahoe in the same year.



Robert H. Ballard was born in Nyack, NY, on September 23, 1913. Apart from the above areas of work, he also was conductor, arranger and composer, and worked for such orchestra leaders as Freddy Martin, and, above all,

for the famous Lawrence Welk from 1953. His also worked for radio, and the big and small screens.

To me, it was a big surprise to find an LP from Argentina on the DOT label some years ago, titled "Las Voces de Bob Ballard". In fact, it was produced in the USA during the autumn of 1961 under the original title "The Voices of Bob Ballard".



It contains 12 tracks sung by a chorus (slightly reminding of the Ray Conniff Singers), including standards such as "These Foolish Things" and "Memories Are Made of

This". Ballard's employment as Director of Production for Ray Conniff's Concert in Stereo is mentioned in the liner notes on the back of that album. Only a few months later, Bob Ballard would be associated with Ray Conniff even more, when he became the recording supervisor for his album "'s Continental", in December 1961. If I am not mistaken, their partnership ended after a decade in May 1971, after the recording of "Great Contemporary Instrumental Hits".



↑ Ray and Bob during the Gold Record Award ceremony for "Somewhere My Love"

Here are two rare collector's items:

EP's with tracks from "Conniff Meets Butterfield"



← EP from Spain

Thanks to my friend Ramon Vilaret I Reig from Spain I can show you here the cover of an EP from Spain, featuring 4 tracks from the first album by Ray Conniff with Billy Butterfield. It is titled "Rosalie". Apart from the title track, the following three are on this 7" record: *South of the Border*, *What a Difference a Day Made*, and Ray's original, *A Love Is Born*. This EP, like the one from my collection shown below, were both released on the Philips label in the late 50s / early 60s. To my knowledge, these are the only EP's from the "Conniff Meets Butterfield" album.

EP from France →



'S CONNIFF
The International Ray Conniff
Fan Club Magazine



is a publication for the discriminating collectors and admirers
of the music of Ray Conniff.

It is compiled and edited by **Manfred Thönicke**, president of
The Ray Conniff International Fan Club.



© November 2003 (Double edition # 3+4/2003)

Subscription rates for the last four hardcopy editions of 's Conniff :

- ♦ If you live in Germany, please remit € 20.45 (account No. 1208 452 852 Haspa [BLZ (bank code) 200 505 50]) to Manfred Thönicke* for that amount. *Deutsche Clubmitglieder überweisen bitte € 20.45 für 4 Ausgaben.*
- ♦ If you live in the UK, please send a cheque amounting to £ 16.00 to Michael G. Leach*.
- ♦ If you live in any other European country, please remit € 22.95 to Manfred*. Members from Belgium are requested to remit the equivalent to Claudine Deman*. Her bank account No. is 360-0031493-71.
- ♦ If you live in the USA, please send a check amounting to US \$ 30.00 to Warren M. Pischke*.
- ♦ If you live in any Latin American country, Asia or Australia, please pay the equivalent of € 25.56 (check at your bankers) to Elias or Chris, or contact Manfred for other ways of effecting payment.

*as for addresses: see below

President and editor-in-chief,
distribution in **Germany**:

Manfred Thönicke

Haynstr. 8
20249 Hamburg
Germany
Tel: +49-(0)40-47 27 27
Fax: +49-(0)40-47 23 97
email: mthoenicke@web.de

For latest "Conniff News"

please visit

Manfred's Ray Conniff Page on the Internet:

thoenicke.bei.t-online.de/RayConniff/index.htm

Resident writer and research:

Dr. Serge Elhaik

15 rue Isambard
27000 Evreux
France
Tel. / Fax: +33-(0)2-32 24 05 20
email: serge.elhaik@wanadoo.fr

Distribution in the **UK**:

Michael G. Leach

1 Court Cottages
Churcham
Gloucester GL2 8AF
England
Tel: +44-(0)1452-750522
email: mike.leach@btinternet.com

Distribution for Continental **Europe**:

Claudine Deman

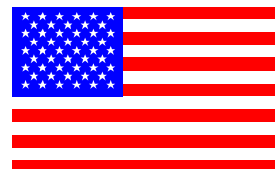
c/o S.A. Pharmacie Deman
105, rue Vandervelde
B-6141 Forchies
Belgium
Fax: +32-71-542166
email:
claudine.deman@skynet.be



Distribution in the **USA**:

Warren M. Pischke

4272 N. 88th St.
Milwaukee, WI 53222
U.S.A.
Tel. & Fax:
+1-(414) 461 2760
email: atlanx@execpc.com



Distribution for **Latin America**:

Elias Ramos Gaia

Rua Kansas, 1208
04558-003 São Paulo - SP
Brazil
Tel.: +55-(0)11-9996-0327
Fax: +55-(0)11 4075-4899
NEW email: eliasgaia@takasago.com.br



Distribution for **Australia and Asia**:

Chris Couldrey

PO Box 1934
Strawberry Hills
NSW 2012
Australia
email:
chrisc@nextcentury.com.au
Chris' Australian Ray Conniff tribute page:
<http://www2.nextcentury.com.au/chrisc>



The Official Ray Conniff Fan Club Website:

<http://mywebpages.comcast.net/dmitchell9/index.htm>

Webmaster:

Doug Mitchell

P.O. Box 2214
Washington, DC 20013,
U.S.A.
email:
dmitchell9@comcast.net

